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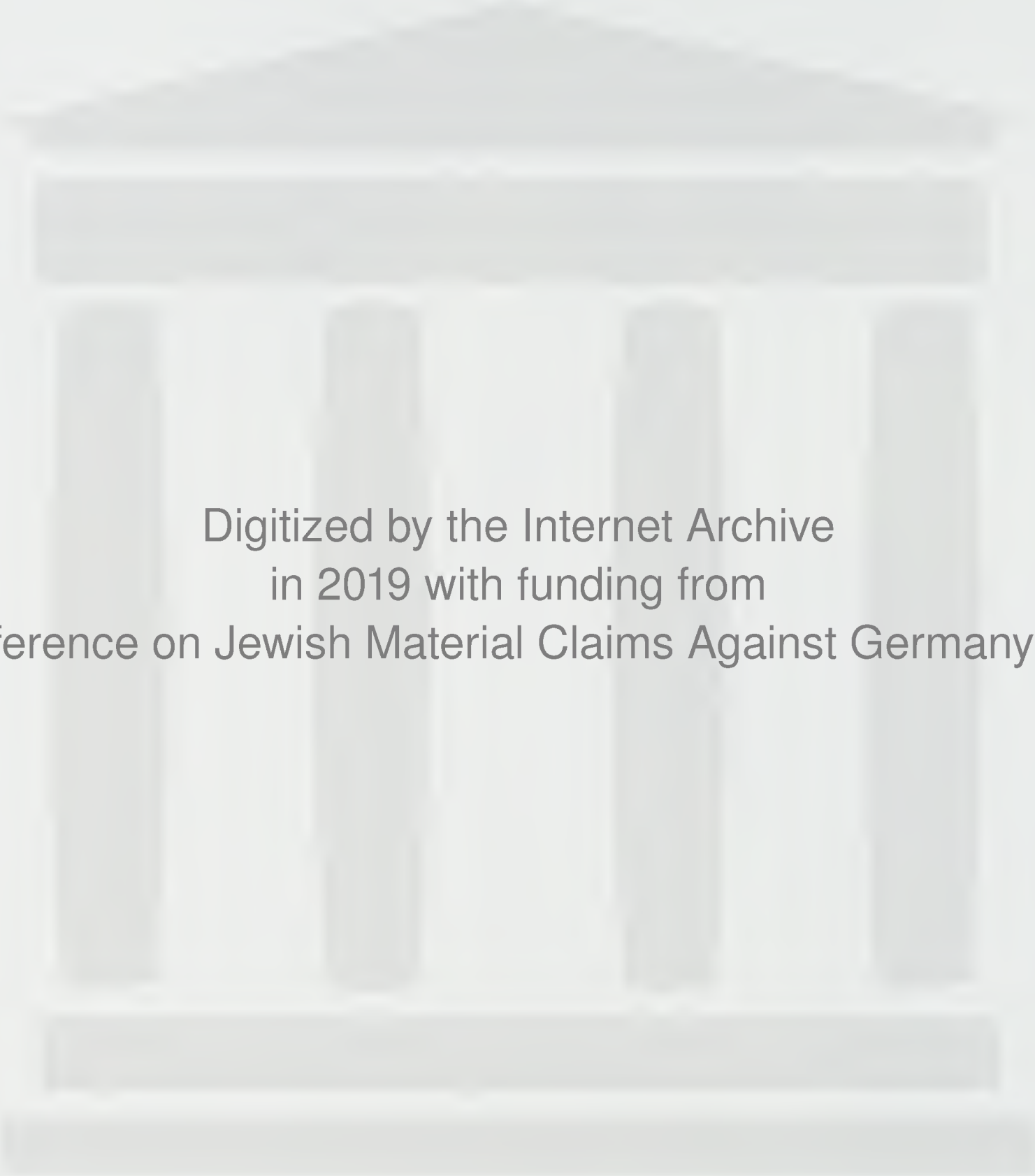


THE MAGIC OF CHILDHOOD.

BY MAGDA SUGAR SIMON.

My Mom

DS
135
H93
J597
2000



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<https://archive.org/details/magicofchildhood01simo>

I'VE HAD A HEAVY LOAD TO CARRY, EVER SINCE I WAS A CHILD.
IT'S WEIGHT COMES FROM THE UNSPOKEN WORDS, THOSE GOT STUCK IN ME
FOR DIFFERENT REASONS AT DIFFERENT TIMES.

STRANGELY I OFTEN FELT GUILTY INSTEAD OF THOSE WHO HURT
ME, MAKING UP EXCUSES FOR THEM. NOT WANTING TO BELIEVE THAT IT WAS
THEIR INTENTION TO HURT.

I AM SEVENTY TWO YEARS OLD. A SURVIVOR OF THE HOLOCAUST.
STILL, I LIKE TO CONJURE UP THE MAGICAL MOMENTS OF MY CHILDHOOD.

THE NEXT HAPPY EVENTS CAME WITH THE CHILDHOOD OF MY
CHILDREN, AND IT FILLED ME WITH JOY. I WANT TO SHARE WITH THEM
THESE STORIES OF OLD, SINCE THERE ARE NO OTHER SURVIVORS IN MY
FAMILY TO TELL THEM ABOUT IT.

THE WORLD OF MY EARLY YEARS ARE FROZEN IN TIME. THE
VILLAGE WHERE I GREW UP STILL HAS THE BILLIONS OF STARS ABOVE.
THE CRICKETS AND THE FROGS ARE STILL MAKING THE CONCERTS, I WAS
TOLD. THE CHURCHBELLS TELL THE TIME OF THE DAY, STILL.

I RETRACED MY STEPS GOING TO SCHOOL, AND MY FEET REMEMBERED
WHERE TO JUMP OVER THE PUDDLES ON A RAINY DAY. BUT THE VILLAGE DID
NOT HAVE THE PEOPLE I WAS LOOKING FOR. THERE WAS THIS EMPTINESS.
EXCEPT FOR AN OLD LADY, ARANKA DEUTSCH. AND THE EMPTINESS ACCOMPANIED
THE UNSPOKEN WORDS, WHEN I LEFT.

I COULD PROBABLY LEARN TO WRITE " PROPERLY " BUT BY THE TIME I COULD, I MIGHT NOT HAVE EVEN THIS MUCH ENERGY TO START TO WRITE THE BOOK I WANT.

I NEVER SAID THAT I WAS A WRITER, BUT I DO LOVE TO PUT DOWN MY EXPERIENCES ON PAPER. COOKING IS AN OTHER THING I ENJOY. IT IS SO REWARDING TO SEE THE FACES OF MY GUESTS, WHEN THEY EAT THE FOOD THAT I COOK.

THERE IS NO PROBLEM FOR ME WITH COOKING AS I HAVE WITH WRITING. HAVING STORED TOO MANY MEMORIES IS NOT HELPING ME. IT IS BECAUSE EACH MEMORY IS CONNECTED TO SO MANY OTHERS. THEY LIKE TO SURFACE WHEN I DO NOT WANT THEM TO, TO CLAIM A PLACE WITHIN THE ORIGINAL THOUGHT. IT MAKES A LOT OF UNEXPECTED JUMPS IN MY STORY. BUT THAT IS HOW MY MIND WORKS. I HAVE NO IDEA HOW OTHERS ORDER AROUND THEIR THOUGHTS. I JUST LET IT TAKE OVER, AND IT MIGHT EVEN FLOW IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. THE CURRENTS OF MY MEMORIES ARE TOO INTENSE AT TIMES TO KEEP THEM IN CHECK. STILL I HOPE THAT WHO EVER READS THIS BOOK, WILL SEE ON THE END, HOW LIFE WAS UNDERSTOOD BY A CHILD, AND NOT UNDERSTOOD BY THE SAME PERSON, WHEN GROWN.

THE FORTIES IN EUROPE COULD NOT BE FORGOTTEN. IT S HORROR HAUNTS MY NIGHTS AS WELL AS MY HOURS AWAKE. WHO LIVED IT THROUGH* ARE FEW, AND THE NUMBERS DAYLY DIMINISH. I WANTED TO WRITE THIS DOWN BEFORE IT IS MY TURN TO GO.

* JEWS

WHEN I WAS YOUNG IT WAS A DISASTER WHEN AN INTERMARRIAGE
TOOK PLACE IN THE FAMILY. AFTER WWII, IT TURNED OUT TO BE MY GOOD
LUCK. I WAS ABLE TO HAVE SOME DOCUMENTS, AND PICTURES OF THE
FAMILY MEMBERS AND MYSELF.

IT GAVE ME SOME GOOD FEELINGS, AND A BETTER IDEA OF WHERE
I AM COMING FROM. BUT MOST OF ALL I HAD TWO FAMILY MEMBERS ALIVE
BECAUSE OF THE MARRIAGE THEY WERE NOT SUPPOSED TO GET INTO.

I AM INCLUDING HERE SOME OF THE DOCUMENTS OF MY FAMILY, SO
THERE WILL BE A SENSE OF CONTINUITY FOR MY CHILDREN .

948 19. évi sz.
anyakhiv.

Választási jogosultság összeírása
hoz az 1938. évi K. t. c. 55. §-a al-
ján bélyegmentes.

KIVONAT

a sárbogárdi izr. hitközség születési jegyzékéből.

A IV betűs könyv 34 lapj. 3 sz. a. az 18. név -
változás évéről a következők foglaltatnak:

Az újszülött neve Flóri
születésének ideje 1969. január 20

neme nő
származásának minősége kerény

Az atya neve, állása vagy foglalkozása Károly Kármel
és születésének helye

Az anya családi és egyéni neve Flórián Rózi
és születésének helye

A szülők lakása Thö - Lak
és a gyermekek születési helye

A bába neve Takai László

Fiuknál: a körülmetélő neve
és a körülmetélés ideje

Leányoknál: a névadás napja Január 6

A koma neve, állása vagy
foglalkozása és lakása Péter Salamon

Jegyzet:

Kelt Sárbogárdon, 19 79 évi május hó 22 napján.

A sárbogárdi izr. hitközség rabbisága
mint anyakönyvi hivatal



Kall
rabi, anyakönyvvezető.

My grandmother's birth cert.

427. 1939. sz.
anyakhiv.

KIVONAT

a hatvani izr. hitközség születési jegyzékéből.

A I/4 betűs könyv 2 lapj. 30 sz. a. az anyakhiv
anyakhiv évről a következők foglaltatnak:

Az újszülött neve Wolf Merson

születésének ideje 1856. szeptember 10

neme _____

származásának minősége chethick

Az atya neve, állása vagy foglalkozása Abraham Merson
és születésének helye _____

Az anya családi és egyéni neve Faty Schacher
és születésének helye _____

A szülők lakása Staten 184
és a gyermek születési helye _____

A bába neve Winkler

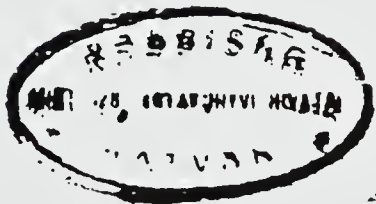
Fiuknál: A körülmetélő neve 18 April dush S. Leri
és a körülmetélés ideje _____

Leányoknál: a névadás napja _____

A koma neve, állása vagy Mosé Waitzner, amant Schuster in Post
foglalkozása és lakása _____

Jegyzet: _____

Hatvan, 1939. évi május hó 24 napján.



A hatvani izr. hitközség rabbisága
mint anyakönyvi hivatal.

Dr. H. H. H.
rabbi, anyakönyvesvezető.

my grandfather's birth cert.

947 1937 sz.
anyakbiv.

KIVONAT

a sárbogárdi izr. hitközség esketési jegyzékéből.

A z V betűs könyv 9 lapj. 3 sz. a. az 18 mai -
Leuenbrutto évről a következők foglaltatnak:

A vőlegény

neve Mason Wolf
foglalkozása és szülőhelye Kereskedő Hálvau
szüleinek neve, állása és lakhelye Mason Abraham
Lehatter Hale meghaltak
lakása Sárbogárdi 206 m.
kora és állapota 37 év nőtlen

Az ara

neve Hörter Zanka
szülőhelye Nis. Lók
szüleinek neve, állása és lakhelye Hörter Samuel ke-
kerkedő Hádinger Pára Sárbogárdi
lakása Sárbogárdi 236 m.
kora és állapota 23 év házas
A hirdetés hol és
hányszor történt Sárbogárdon i. Sárbogárdi 3 m.
Az esketés ideje 1892 április 26
Az esketés helye Sárbogárdi
A tanúk neve és állása Gesheid Samuel
Leuenbrutto Jakob
Az eskető rabbi neve Lóvi Isaac ben Sál
JEGYZET.

Kelt Sárbogárdon, 1939 évi május hó 22 napján.

A sárbogárdi izr. hitközség rabbisága
mint anyakönyvi hivatal

Kabstol
sebbi anyakönyveszető

Marriage cert. of my grandparents.

Slav

A ~~magyar~~kanizsai rabbisá, mint anyakönyvi hivatal.

Sz. 185
1938.



KIVONAT.

A *Starokanji, Zai* izr. hitközség házassági anyakönyvéből
II kötet 7 lap 31, folyó sorszám.

A vőlegény

neve: *Schlesinger David*
születés helye: *Golozma*
foglalkozása: *kereskedő*
szüleinek neve: *Schlesinger Matyas és Fani skül. Kohn*
lakása: *Starokanjika*
életkora: *25 éves*
állapota: *nőtlen*

A menyasszony

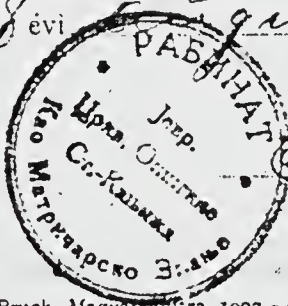
neve: *Goldschmied Johanna*
születés helye: *Pető / Trógrád m.*
foglalkozása: *Goldschmied mester és Lottó skül.*
szüleinek neve: *Goldschmied mester és Lottó skül.*
lakása: *Starokanjika*
életkora: *28 éves*
állapota: *házas*

Az esketés

éve, hónapja és napja: *1937. március 15-én*
a rabbi vagy helyettesének neve és hivatala: *Friedrich*
tanúi: *Schlesinger mester és Goldschmied mester*

Eszrevétel: A vőlegény családnevének "Sugar" névre
kelt átnevezését a m. kir. miniszterium 920 VI. sz. a.
kelt rendeletével megengedte.
Ezen okmány sugallata is a 1929. évi 907.
sz. törvény által szabottak alapján
alkalmazandó, az anyakönyvvél mindenben egyezik.
Starokanizsán, 1938. évi március hó 15-én.

The name
was changed
to Sugar



Bruck, Magyarország 1907-4

rabbi anyakönyvvezető

kegyeltes

My grandparents marriage licence.

Saraf

A ~~magyar~~ kanizsai rabbiság mint anyakönyvi hivatal.

SZ.

184

1938.



KIVONAT.

A *Sarakajizai* izr. hitközség halálozási anyakönyvéből
I. kötet *6.* lap *141.* folyó szám.

Az elhalálozás éve, hónapja és napja: *1873. november 26.*

Az elhalt neve: *Matyas Schlesinger.*

„ foglalkozása: _____

„ neme: *férfi*

„ állapota: *házas.*

„ kora: *45 éves.*

„ születési és lakhelye: *Sarakajizai, Sarakajizai.*

A szülők neve: _____

A hátramaradt házastársa: *Körmöczy János.*

Az elhalálozás helye (utca, házsám): *Sarakajizai*

Betegség vagy a halál oka: *tüdőgyulladás*

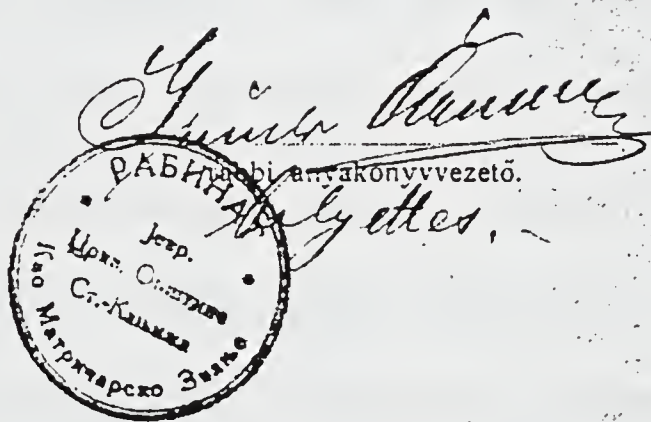
A temetés helye és napja: *Sarakajizai.*

Eszrevétel: *Ezen okmány jogerővel és Magyarországra*

küldött 1929. évben Borsodban megállított kocsikaról
szabályok 32. §-a alapján állított ki

Az anyakönyvvél mindenben egyezik.

Saraf kanizsán, 19*38* évi *augusztus* hó *26* n.



My greatgrandfather died in pneumonia at the
age of 45.

KLARA AND I WERE WALKING HOME TOGETHER FROM KINDERGARTEN. HER HOME WAS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND OUR HOME. OUR HOME WAS JUST AN ORDINARY HOUSE, WITH THE USUAL GARDEN OF FLOWERS, AN ENCLOSED ORCHARD OF VINES, UNDER WHICH WE WOULD EAT OUR MIDDAY MEAL ON A HOT DAY. BESIDE IT STOOD A WELL. IT WAS THE KIND OF WELL ONE HAD TO WORK WITH A WHEEL, TO BRING UP THE WATER IN A PAIL FOR SPRINKLING THE FLOWER BEDS AT SUNDOWN. IT WAS A WELL WITH A MARVELOUS ECHO. I WOULD SAY "MAGDA" AND IN A SECOND IT WOULD MYSTERIOUSLY CALL OUT, ITS VOICE REVERBERATING MY NAME "MAAAGGDAAA". THE WELL KNEW MY NAME.

BUT NOTHING ELSE WAS REALLY UNUSUAL BESIDE THAT, MAYBE THE PORCUPINE AND THE TWO TINY LIZARDS, THAT MY BIG BROTHER BROUGHT HOME FROM A BOYSCOUT TRIP. WE KIND OF RESPECTED THE PORCUPINE.

KLARA'S HOME WAS A DIFFERENT AFFAIR, AND IT FILLED ME WITH MARVELS. THEY NOT ONLY HAD A HOUSE, BUT A BARN AND A SILO TOO, AND A PIGPEN, AND A PLACE FOR CHICKENS, DUCKS AND GEESE.

WHEN I WAS FIRST INVITED INTO THEIR KITCHEN I COULD NOT BELIEVE MY EYES. THE KITCHEN HAD AN EARTHEN FLOOR AND IT HAD A

REAL BIG BUILT IN HEARTH FOR BAKING BREAD. IN THE KITCHEN THERE WAS A BIG BED BESIDES THE BENCH AND TABLE. IN THE MIDDLE OF THE KITCHEN THERE WAS AN OVER SIZED-STOOL ON WHICH A BASKET STOOD. IN THE BASKET THERE WAS LOTS OF ARRANGED STRAW, WITH A HEN SITTING IN THE MIDDLE. UNDER THE HEN WERE EGGS, BUT NOT CHICKEN EGGS!!!!!! DUCK EGGS!!!! THE HEN DID NOT KNOW THAT.

WHAT FANTASTIC ARRAY OF THINGS...KLARA DID NOT HAVE TO ASK ME IN THE NEXT DAY. LIKE MAGNET PULLING A STEEL PIN, WAS I ATTRACTED TO THAT KITCHEN. I HAVE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE IT BEFORE OR AFTER TO THIS VERY DAY.

I WALKED KLARA HOME EVERY DAY AND INTO THE KITCHEN I MARCHED WITH HER. I JUST COULD NOT WAIT FOR THE DUCKLINGS TO POP OUT OF THE EGGS. ON DAY THEY FINALLY DID, AND I WAS RIGHT THERE, AND MY SURPRISE WAS EXCEEDED ONLY BY THAT OF THE HEN'S...SHE WAS MORE SURPRISED THAN I. SHE WAS TRICKED, BUT NOT I. I LOVED THOSE FLUFFY, YELLO, NOISY LITTLE DUCKLINGS. I TOUCHED THEM. NEVER DID I FEEL SUCH SOFTNESS BEFORE, NEVER DID I SEE SUCH BEAUTY, AS DUCKLINGS SHAKING OFF WHITE EGGSHELLS AND STEPPING OUT TO TAKE A FEEBLE WALK ON THEIR WOBBLY LEGS.

BESIDES THE COWS, PIGS, DICKS, GEESE AND CHICKEN I HEARD THEY ALSO HAD MICE IN THE SILO. AND FOR THAT REASON THEY NEVER FED THE

TWO CATS THEY HAD. THOSE CATS COULD CATCH ALL THE MICE WHEN THEY WERE HUNGRY, AND I KNEW THEY DID.

ONE DAY WHEN I WALKED KLARA HOME I SAW ONE OF THE CATS PLAYING WITH A MOUSE HE COUGHT. SOMEHOW THE CAT BIT THE MOUSE BUT NOT BADLY ENOUGH TO FINISH IT, AND THE MOUSE GOT AWAY. AFTER A SHORT CHASE HE BIT HIM AGAIN, AND THEN GAVE HIM SOME KIND OF FIRST AID. I SAW THE CAT PETTING THE MOUSE WITH ITS PAW SO THE POOR LITTLE ONE FELT BETTER AGAIN, AND TRIED TO GET AWAY.

THAN KLARA'S BIG BROTHER PISTA WALKED OUT OF THE HOUSE. HE WAS AMUSED AT WHAT HE SAW, AND JOINED IN THE MOUSE CAT PLAY.

TO MY HORROR HE PICKED UP THE LITTLE MOUSE BY THE TAIL, AND STARTED TO SWING IT BACK AND FORTH INFRONT OF THE FRANTIC CAT, WHO WAS TRYING TO RECAPTURE HIS PREY. PROBABLY IT WENT ON AND ON, AND IT MUST HAVE BEEN A LOT OF FUN FOR THAT PLAYFUL CAT, OF WHICH I WAS THINKING (AT THAT TIME) AS A VERY CRUEL BEAST DESERVING THE SAME KIND OF DEATH, AND PISTA, FOR WHOM I HAD NO WORDS. I DID NOT WAIT FOR THE SCORE, BUT I RAN HOME WITH TEARS IN MY EYES, FRIGHTENED.

I WAS ABOUT TO FORGET THE WHOLE INCIDENT FOR I DID NOT SEE KLARA DURING THE SUMMER. I WENT TO SEE MY GRANDPARENTS AND SOME COUSINS DURING THE SUMMER IN ANOTHER CITY AND HAD A LOVELY

VACATION AMONG THE BEAUTIFUL GREEN HILLS THAT SURROUNDED THE CITY OF EGER. THE PLACE WAS FULL OF CHURCHES AND THE PEALING OF THE DIFFERENT BELLS WERE ENCHATING, ESPECIALLY IN THE QUIET OF THE WAITING DARK. AT THE END OF THE VACATION I WENT HOME TO OUR MUCH LESS BEAUTIFUL CITY, I WAS HOMESICK AFTER A FEW WEEKS. KINDERGARTEN STARTED AGAIN. I MET ALL MY LITTLE FRIENDS. KLARA WAS THERE AND WE WERE HAPPY. KLARA INVITED ME A FEW DAYS LATER TO HER HOME. THE HARVEST OF THE CORN HAD TAKEN PLACE AND THE EVENING WAS TURNED INTO A " FIESTA". PEOPLE WERE INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THE HUSKING OF THE CORN, WHICH WAS TO BE PLACED IN THE BIG SILO TO DRY OUT LATER..THE SILO WAS PREPARED FOR THE NEW CROP. LAYERS OF LAST YEAR'S CORN WERE STILL TO BE REMOVED. A FEW PEOPLE WERE WORKING ON THAT, WHILE WE LOOKED AMONG THE EARS FOR TENDER ONES TO ROAST AT THE OPEN FIRE.

KLARA'S BROTHER WAS CALLING FOR US, AND WE WENT RUNNING TO HIM. HE WAS STANDING IN THE SILO, POINTING DOWN FOR US TO LOOK. WE DID NOT ONLY SEE SO MANY TINY NEW MICE THAT WE COULD NOT COUNT BUT ALSO SIX TINY KITTENS THAT MUST HAVE BEEN BORN SHORTLY BEFORE DISCOVERED. THEIR EYES WERE STILL CLOSED. THEY WERE LITTLE LIVING FURRY BALLS OF DIFFERENT COLORS. THEY WERE MOST LOVELY CREATURES ALMOST LIKE THE DUCKLINGS THAT I SAW COMING OUT OF THE SHELLS.

WE DID NOT KNOW WHERE TO LOOK. THERE WAS SO MUCH ACTIVITY!
THE MICE RUNNING IN ALL DIRECTIONS, THE MOTHER CAT CARRYING AWAY
HER KITTENS ONE BY ONE FROM THEIR HIDDEN DISTURBED HOME, THE PEOPLE
SINGING WHILE PEELING THE CORN, STARS RUNNING IN THE DARKEST BLUE
SKY, PASSERBY⁵ CALLING IN FROM THE STREET TO SAY SOMETHING WITTY..
WHERE SHALL I LOOK?

THEN SOMETHING CAUGHT MY ATTENTION. PISTA, KLARA'S BROTHER
WAS DIGGING A HOLE IN THE GARDEN. WHEN HE FINISHED HE PICKED UP THE
LIVING KITTENS AND PLACED THEM IN THE HOLE. THE MOTHER CAT WAS
FRANTICALLY TRYING TO GET THEM OUT. THAT WAS WHEN IT DAWNED ON ME
THAT HE WAS GOING TO BURY THEM ALIVE, THOSE LOVELY LIVING THINGS.

I STARTED SCREAMING AT THE TOP OF MY VOICE. PISTA LOOKED
AT ME AND SAID "WHAT IS THERE TO BE EXCITED ABOUT?". I TURNED AROUND
AND LOOKED AT THE OTHER PEOPLE, WHO WERE TAKING IN THE WHOLE SCENE
FOR A NATURAL HAPPENING, EXCEPT FOR MY SCREAMING.....

I RAN OUT, CRYING ALL THE WAY HOME, RAGED AND TERRIFIED.

WE MUST HAVE MOVED TO JASZBERENY WHEN I WAS STILL A BABY, BECAUSE MY FIRST MEMORY OF MY THREE YEARS OLDER BROTHER PETER IS THAT HE WAS GETTING READY IN THE MORNING TO GO TO KINDERGARTEN IN THE NEARBY NUNNERY. MY COUSIN EDITH WHOSE FAMILY SPENT SOME TIME WITH US ON ACCOUNT THE DEPRESSION ALSO WENT ALONG WITH HIM. PETER HAD TO BE FIVE.

INCIDENTALLY I WAS TRANSFERRED TO STUDY THERE FROM GRADE SCHOOL. I JUST WONDER, THE NUNS LET IN BOYS INTO KINDERGARTEN CLASSES?????????. BY THE TIME I STARTED TO GO THERE WE MOVED TO AN OTHER, BIGGER HOUSE, WITH BIG WINDOWS, I LIKED TO LOOK OUT TROUGH.

I LOVED THIS NEW LOCATION, FOR THAT IS WHERE I MET THE LITTLE BOY FROM ACROSS THE STREET. HE WAS YOUNGER THAN I. HE HAD A BIG BROTHER IN BUDAPEST ATTENDING THE UNIVERSITY TO BECOME A VETERINARIAN. DINI TOLD ME, THAT HIS BROTHER GEORGE "EXAMINED A COW AND THE COW DIED". WE WERE BOTH HORRIFIED, AND WHEN DINI BIT MY FACE, AND MY MOTHER RUSHED ME TO DR. HALMOS WHO LIVED CLOSE TO US, I SCREAMED AT THE TOP OF MY VOICE. I DID NOT WANT HIM TO EXAMINE MY FACE. POOR SEVERIN HALMOS DID NOT KNOW THAT I EQUATE THE DR. TITLE WITH DEATH ITSELF. I WAS NOT SCARED OF HIS FATHER THOUGH, WHO WAS THE TEMPLE'S CANTOR. "UNCLE HALMOS" HAD A RICH VOICE, I WILL NEVER

FORGET. IT FILLED THE TEMPLE WITH MAGIC.. HE WAS A STOCKY MAN AND SOMEHOW THE TALLIS SLID DOWN FROM HIS SHOULDERS EASILY. HE WAS FOR EVER PULLING ON IT, EVEN WHEN HE WAS SINGING.

"UNCLE HALMOS" HAD A VERY LARGE VINEYARD. HE PRODUCED KOSHER WINE. WHEN MY BROTHER VILI HAD HIS BAR MITZVA PARTY, HE SENT AS A GIFT THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GRAPES AND OTHER FRUITS.

WE WENT TO THE SERVICES TO HEAR HIM SING WITH DINI'S COUSIN, TIBI KERTESZ AND TIBI OBERLANDER, WHO SANG SODO. IN FACT MY BROTHER VILI ALSO SANG BUT NOT SOLO. MY FATHER SANG DOWNSTAIRS WITH THE CROWD. THE CHOIR WAS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, SCHOOLBOYS.

THE CANTOR AND THE REST OF THEM WERE ACCOMPANIED ON THE ORGAN BY GEZA KIRALY, THE REFORMED CANTOR TEACHER. WE HAD A CONCERT EVERY TIME WE LOVED SO MUCH....I LEARNED MUCH LATER THAT CANTOR HALMOS WAS ALSO A COMPOSER. HE DID NOT SING THE SAME MELODIES THAT OTHER " NEOLOG " JEWS SANG IN THE TEMPLES OF EUROPE. THIS WAS DONE IN ORDER, THAT NO MATTER WHAT COUNTRY NEOLOG JEWS TRAVEL THEY FEEL AT HOME IN ANY COUNTRY, HEARING THE SAME MELODIES.

I WAS ALREADY DISAPPOINTED IN THE SERVICE IN CSONGRAD, WHERE WE MOVED IN LATER YEARS. THE CONGREGATION WAS ORTHODOX THERE. THERE WAS NO ORGAN OR CHOIR. AFTER THE WAR WHEN I WENT TO A NEOLOG

TEMPLE STILL IN EUROPE, THEY SANG DIFFERENT MELODIES, THAT I WAS ACCUSTOMED TO FROM CANTOR HALMOS. I FELT LIKE A STRANGER IN "MY TEMPLE"...

DINI KERTESZ WAS A DELIGHTFUL CHAP. SINCE HE LIVED EXACTLY ACROSS THE STREET, AND THE ONLY DANGER CROSSING IT WAS AT SUNDOWN, WHEN THE GEESE RETURNED FROM THE PASTURE (THEY LEFT EARLY MORNING WHEN WE WERE STILL ASLEEP) AND THE GANDER GOT EXCITED, AND WOULD BITE, IF ONE WENT CLOSE TO THE GEESE. IT WAS SAFE ALL DAY TO VISIT BY CROSSING TO THE OTHER SIDE.

DINI CAME TO VISIT ME SEVERAL TIMES A DAY. WE ALL LOVED DINI. HE HAD A VERY SMILING FACE AND A WONDERFUL DISPOSITION. WHEN MY MOM BAKED SOMETHING AND GAVE HIM A TASTE OF IT, HE ASKED FOR THE RECIPE TO TAKE IT HOME TO HIS MOM MANCI. HE WAS NOT FOUR YET AT THE TIME.

FIFTY YEARS LATER AT HIS YOUNGER DAUGHTER'S WEDDING HE INTRODUCED ME TO HIS SON INLAW'S FATHER SAYING "MEET MY FIRST LOVE". I WAS STUNNED! "WHY DID YOU NOT EVER TELL ME?" "I DID" HE SAID. "I BIT YOU WHEN I WAS FOUR YEARS OLD". HE CERTAINLY DID. I HAD FEVER FROM IT.. SEVERIN HALMOS CAME EVERY DAY TO SCRATCH OFF THE SCAB. HE SAID THAT WAS THE ONLY WAY IT WILL NOT LEAVE MARKS. HE WAS RIGHT, BUT I SCREAMED WITH TERROR EVERY DAY (SEE I WAS AN EXPERIENCED SCREEMER)

Dini on his father's arm,
 Maui his Mom
 &



Dini,
 Dr. Kertész.



Eva
 his
 wife,
 and
 baby.



EVEN BEFORE HE TOUCHED ME. SOMEHOW I WAS NEVER ANGRY WITH DINI.

IT ALL HAPPENED ON HIS FORTH BIRTHDAY. HE CAME OVER AND TOLD ME, "I GOT A CHAIR FOR MY BIRTHDAY., I WOULD LIKE YOU TO SIT ON IT AND I WILL KISS YOU". IT SOUNDED GOOD TO ME. I WENT OVER TO HIS HOUSE. HE POSITIONED ME ON THE CHAIR AND I DID NOT HAVE TO WAIT, FOR WHAT I THOUGHT WOULD BE A KISS. HE BIT MY FACE WITH ALL HIS TEETH. HEARING MY SHOUTS OF PAIN THE MAID RAN IN, AND WHEN SHE SAW MY FACE FULL OF BLOOD, TOLD DINI'S MOTHER, A VERY BEAUTIFUL AND SWEET WOMAN. SHE RAN IN WITH A LARGE WHITE TOWEL. SHE WRAPPED MY WHOLE HEAD IN IT, PICKED ME UP, AND RAN WITH ME TO MY MOM. MOM TOOK ME TO THE DOCTOR, AS I SAID BEFORE.

WHEN I MET DINI THIRTY YEARS LATER, HE WAS A LEAN TALL MAN. THE YOUNG VERY WELL-FED LOOKING YOUNG BOY WAS GONE, AND I DID NOT RECOGNIZE HIM. I ASKED HIM "WHO ARE YOU ?" HE GOT HOLD OF MY CHIN, AND GENTLY TURNING MY HEAD ASKED ME "WHERE IS MY BITE ?".

I WAS SO HAPPY TO SEE MY "LITTLE DINI" AND HIS MOST LOVELY FAMILY. HIS WIFE EVA GAVE BIRTH TO THREE BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN. ONE WAS JUST EIGHT MONTHS OLD. THEY ALL RADIATED HAPPINESS. DINI'S FATHER "UNCLE GYULA" WAS WELL AND ALIVE. WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL WE BOTH DINI AND I SAT ON HIS LAP AS HE SANG FOR US A HUNGARIAN SONG I STILL REMEMBER.

THERE WAS ONLY ONE SAD TIME, WHEN I TALKED TO THEM ABOUT MANCI'S DEATH. SHE DIED IN THE SAME CONCENTRATION CAMP, IN LENZING, WHERE WE WERE TOGETHER. IT WAS A TRAIN ACCIDENT. AT LEAST I WAS ABLE TO SAY THAT SHE WAS BURIED WITH FOUR OTHERS IN ONE COFFIN AS A PERSON IN THE BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS OF TYROL.. THE TRAIN HIT ALL FIVE OF THEM AT A CROSSING. WE MARCHED TO WORK IN PITCH DARK, SINCE IT WAS VERY EARLY. ONLY THE STARS LIT UP THE SKIES...AS WE MARCHED TROUGH THE SMALL FOREST WE HAD TO CROSS THE RAILROADS. THE TRAIN COULD BE HEARD IN THE STILLNESS APPROACHING. OUR GUARDS HURRIED US "SCHNELLER, SCHNELLER"!!!! BUT THE END OF THE COLUMN OF TWO HUNDRED FIFTY PEOPLE DID NOT MAKE IT TROUGH. FIVE WOMEN WERE RUN DOWN AT THE NEAR END.

A LOT OF SNOW FELL THE NIGHT BEFORE,THE GUARDS GOT A SLEIGH AND PLACED THE FIVE LADIES ON, AND HAD THEM PULLED BACK TO CAMP. THEY WERE WRAPPED UP IN A BLANKET AND WERE PLACED BESIDE THE WALL OF OUR ROOM. IT WAS VERY COLD. A FEW DAYS LATER A CASKET WAS DELIVERED OF PINWOOD TO OUT GREAT SURPRISE, AND MANCI AND THE FOUR OTHERS WERE PLACED IN, AND THEY WERE TAKEN OUT OF THE CAMP TO BE BURIED.

DR. DENES KERTESZ (DINI) LIVED IN CIBAKHAZA WITH HIS FAMILY. THE VILLAGE LIFE SUITED HIM WELL. I WRITE THIS IN THE PAST TENSE, BECAUSE TO MY GREAT SORROW HE DIED A FEW YEARS AGO...

IN HIS SPARE TIME DINI WORKED ON AN ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ARTISTS, WRITERS AND POETS. HE ALSO WAS FAMOUS OF THE LARGEST SMALL GRAPHICS COLLECTION OF HIS. THE BEST IN THE WORLD. THEIR HOME WAS LIKE A MUSEUM, BUT INFORMAL AND IT FELT COMFORTABLE WITH FOLK ARTS ALL AROUND. THE GRAPHICS WERE FILED, WHEN NOT ON EXHIBIT IN LIBRARIES OR MUSEUMS.

DINI AND FAMILY TRAVELED TO JASZBERENY FROM TIME TO TIME TO VISIT THE BIG BROTHER GEORGE, DR. KERTESZ AND FAMILY..AND EVERY FIRST SUNDAY OF JUNE (OR JULY?) ALL THE STILL LIVING JEWISH JASZBERENY PEOPLE WENT THERE FOR THE MEMORIAL SERVICE IN THE CEMETERY.

WHEN I WENT THERE FOR THE FIRST TIME AFTER THE WAR, I WAS SHOCKED LOOKING AT THE NAMES ON THE MEMORIAL WHO DIED IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS. I HAD NO IDEA BEFORE, HOW MANY JEWS WERE LIVING IN JASZBERENY BEFORE THE WAR. I DID REMEMBER THE TEMPLE BEING FULL ON HOLIDAYS. ALSO REMEMBER THE LADIES SMELLING CLOVE SPIKED QUINCES ON JOM KIPPUR.

EXCEPT FOR JUTKA STARK, VERA LENGYEL AND I, MAGDA SUGAR OUR CLASSMATES NAMES WERE WRITTEN UPON THE MARBLE WALL I STOOD INFRONT OF DISBELEIVING.

ONE OF OUR CLASSMATE AGI KLEIN COMMITTED SUICIDE WITH HER FAMILY TOGETHER, AND WITH OUR DENTIST'S FAMILY THE SPRINGERS. THEY GOT A LETTER FROM GERMANY, TELLING THEM WHAT HAPPENED TO THE JEWS THERE, AND DID NOT FEEL LIKE GOING THROUGH THE SAME. MY OTHER CLASSMATES LIKE KATO GUTTMAN AND HER FAMILY WERE ALSO LOST.

WE WERE GOOD FRIENDS IN THE JEWISH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WITH JUTKA AND AGI, AND VERA AND KATI. THERE WERE THIRTY FIVE CHILDREN IN THAT SCHOOL. THE FOUR CLASSES WERE ALL IN ONE ROOM. OUR TEACHER ELEMER BRUDER JUGGLED THE CLASSES SO EVERYONE WAS OCCUPIED AT THE SAME TIME. WHEN I WAS IN FIRST GRADE AND HAD A WRITING ASSIGNMENT I WAS LISTENING TO WHAT HE WAS LECTURING THE FORTH GRADERS ON. BY SECOND GRADE I KNEW THE FORTH GRADERS SUBJECT. I THINK WE ALL KNEW IT, BUT I HAD THE NERVE TO PUT UP MY HAND, WHEN A FORTH GRADER DID NOT HAVE THE ANSWER. THE TEACHER ASKED ME "WHAT IS IT SUGI ?" AND I SAID "CAN I SAY IT, CAN I ANSWER?" HE SAID "YES", AND I DID. I WAS SUCH A STINKER. IT IS TRUE THAT HE ENCOURAGED COMPETITION.

WE STUDIED HEBREW, WE READ THE BIBLE AND LOVED THE IDEA OF STUDYING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE. BUT THERE WAS A PROBLEM. THE TRANSLATION WAS FREE TRANSLATION, SO WE HAD NO IDEA WHAT WORD MEANS WHAT. BY THE END OF THE FOUR YEAR WE COULD RECITE THE PRAYERBOOK NOT UNDERSTANDING THE WORD BY WORD MEANING.

NOW I KNOW ABOUT TWO THOUSAND WORDS IN THE HEBREW LANGUAGE, WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT THEY MEAN.

WE STUDIED THE CALCULATION TABLES BY REPEATING EVERY DAY THE WHOLE WORK, SO IF SOMEONE WOULD WAKE YOU FROM YOUR SLEEP AND ASK HOW MUCH IS NINE BY SEVEN YOU COULD ANSWER WITHOUT THINKING.

WE LEARNED HOW TO WRITE THE NICE WAY, AND READ AND RECITE POEMS, AND LEARNED ARTWORK. WE WERE LET OUT FOR BREAKS AND PLAYED ON THE PLAYGROUND. IN WINTERTIME THE GROUND WAS COVERED WITH ICE AND IN RECESS WE SKATED. EVERYBODY HAD TO DRINK MILK, THAT WAS DELIVERED TO THE SCHOOL. ON TWO AFTERNOONS WE HAD GYM AND EMBROIDERY FOR THE GIRLS.

BRUDER HAD A DAUGHTER SAME AGE AS I, IN PAPA. THAT WAS WHERE HE CAME FROM. AGI WAS RAISED BY HIS PARENTS. BRUDER WAS DIVORCED, WHICH WAS NOT USUAL IN THE THIRTIES IN HUNGARY. SOMETIMES WE HAD IN OUR SCHOOL THE LATER VERY FAMOUS EVA RUTTKAI, WHEN VISITING HER RELATIVES IN JASZBERENY FOR A LONGER STAY.

WE ALSO HAD TO GO TO SCHOOL ON SATURDAYS. WE HAD SERVICE THERE INSTEAD OF THE TEMPLE, WHERE THE GROWNUPS WENT. THE REASON FOR THE SEPARATE SERVICE WAS, THAT IT WAS THERE IN THE SCHOOL, WHERE THE YOUNG BOYS LEARNED HOW TO BEHAVE WHEN CALLED UP TO THE TORAH, AFTER THEY HAD THEIR BAR MITZVA IN THE TEMPLE.

I THINK IT WAS A WONDERFUL WAY OF LEARNING HOW TO STAND UP TO FACE THE CONGREGATION AND READ THE TORAH. IT BUILT SELFCONFIDENCE.

OF COURSE ON SATURDAYS WE PUT ON OUR HOLIDAY CLOTHES, AND WE FELT FESTIVE. IT WAS ANOTHER STORY HOW WE GOT TO SCHOOL.

AT THE SAME TIME THE GENTILE KIDS WERE ALSO ON THEIR WAY TO SCHOOL, AND THEY SANG FOR US OBSCENITIES WHEN THEY SAW THE JEWISH KIDS. IN MY YEARS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL THE TWO MOST POPULAR SONGS WERE: "YOU JEWS BELONG ON THE END OF ROPES (HANGING) ALL OF YOU, THERE ARE SPIKES IN BUDAPEST THAT IS WHERE YOU ALSO BELONG". I ADMIT IT IS FREE TRANSLATION AND I COULD NOT DO BETTER WITH THE RHYME. HERE IS THE OTHER ONE. " I PLANTED JEW SEEDS IN MY GARDEN. EVERY EVENING I DOZED IT WITH "VITRIOL" .(A POISON) STILL IT GREW ARMS , LEGS AND BEARDS. THEY SHOULD ALL HAVE ROPES AROUND THEIR.. STINKING JEWS NECKS".

WELL, THAT IS HOW WE GOT TO SCHOOL ON MOST DAYS.

CAN ANYONE IMAGINE HOW A YOUNG CHILD FEELS WHEN HEARING THESE SONGS DAY BY DAY FROM OTHER CHILDREN?????????????

AND OUR PARENTS TAUGHT US NOT TO RESPOND.

I ALSO HAD A BOY WHO COLLECTED FIVE FILLERS FROM ME EVERY WEEK UNTIL MY DAD LEARNED ABOUT IT. HE WAS A SON OF A POLICEMAN.

AT THE END OF THE FOUR YEARS WE TRANSFERRED TO THE NUNNERY. VERA, KATI AND I CONTINUED THERE TOGETHER, STILL ATTENDING HEBREW SCHOOL IN THE AFTERNOONS. WE STUDIED JEWISH HISTORY AND ALSO WE WERE GETTING READY FOR OUR CONFIRMATION LATER.

WE STUDIED WITH DR. BELA REICH A YOUNG JUST OUT OF SCHOOL VERY-VERY GOOD LOOKING RABBI. HE WAS A DRAMATIC ORATOR. AND YES, WE THE YOUNG GIRLS WERE ALL IN LOVE WITH HIM. THE OLDER ONES TOO. AND THERE WERE RUMORS THAT A CERTAIN MARRIED LADY WAS ALSO CRAZY ABOUT HIM. I DID NOT BLAME HER AT ALL....SUSAN BALINT TOLD ME, THAT SHE JUST COULD NOT TAKE HER EYES OFF HIM WHILE IN CLASS AND SHE FELT HE NOTICED IT... SUSAN LEFT FOR AMERICA IN THIRTY NINE, AND DID NOT RETURN UNTIL VERY MUCH LATER AFTER THE WAR. HER BROTHER JOHN MY FRIEND AND SKATE-MATE SURVIVED, AND BY THEN HE TOO WAS IN AMERICA. THE REST OF THE FAMILY PERISHED IN CAMP.

SUSAN WENT TO AMERICA IN PRETENCE OF GOING TO THE WORLD FAIR. HER DEPARTURE AT THE RIGHT MOMENT WAS A MIRACLE.

THE FOLLOWING NIGHT THE JEWS OF JASZBERENY WOKE UP TO THE NOISE OF BREAKING GLASSES OF THEIR WINDOWS...JASZBERENY NOW WAS AN OPENLY JEW HATING COMMUNITY.

TWO UNFURTUNATE THINGS HAPPENED WITHIN A SHORT TIME.....

4,

1,



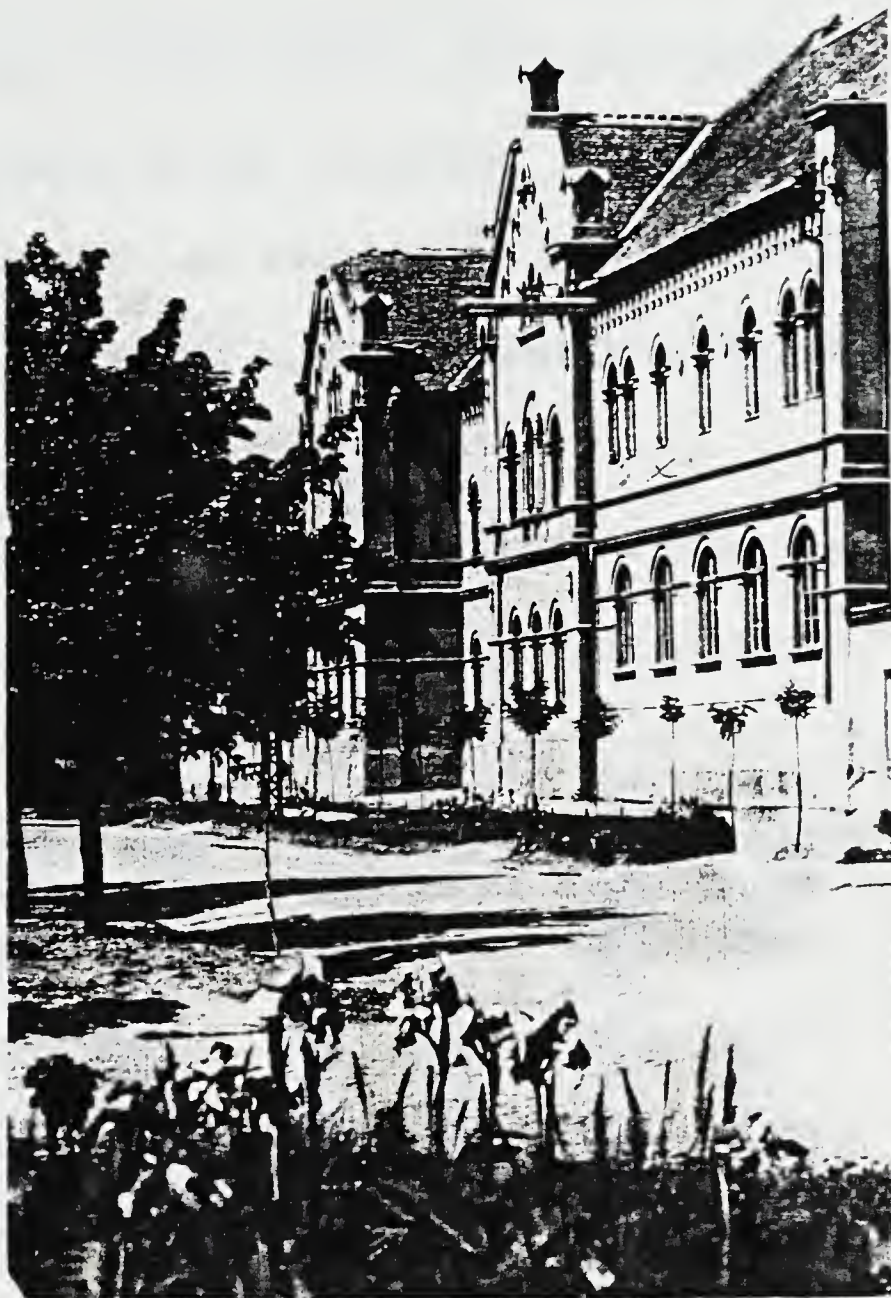
2,



3,



- 1) our class in the Mátra.
I am in the white dress.
- 2) visiting family in Eger
Edith, Milma & Magda
- 3) John my skate-mate +
the rabbits. Vili's first
photos with his new
camera.

x my
class

5,



- 4, Peter's kindergarten and my
middle school, the nursery.
- 5, school end. Peter.

A YOUNG JEWISH LAWYER FELL IN LOVE WITH A GIRL WHO WORKED IN A MOVIE HOUSE SELLING THE TICKETS AT THE "BARATOK" PARK. HE ASKED HER IN MARRIAGE AND SHE REFUSED. HE WENT HOME, GOT A PISTOL AND ON RETURNING TO HER HE SHOT HER DEAD, THEN HE COMMITTED SUICIDE. I DONT KNOW IF HE DIED OR NOT.

AND THERE WAS ANOTHER TERRIBLE HAPPENING WITHIN A FEW WEEKS. A MARRIED WOMAN AND A JEWISH MAN FELL MADLY IN LOVE. THEY DECIDED TO KILL THE HUSBAND. THEY ARRANGED A HORSECARRIAGE RIDE IN THE COUNTRY. ON THE WAY THE TWO OF THEM BEAT HIM TO DEATH. THEY DUMPED HIM IN AN OPEN TRENCH THAT WAS FILLED WITH WATER. HE WAS RESCUED IN TIME, AND RECOVERED TO TELL THE STORY. THE WOMAN WAS CATHOLIC.

THESE TWO ITEMS BEING VERY UNUSUAL WERE ALL OVER AND OVER AGAIN IN THE NEWSPAPER. THE "JASZHIRLAP" CLAIMED THAT THE JEWS MADE "CHIKAGO OF OUR TOWN".

ABOUT THE SAME TIME IT ALSO HAPPENED THAT A TWELVE YEAR OLD JEWISH GIRL SAVED THE LIFE OF A THREE YEAR OLD. IT WAS I, THAT IS HOW I KNOW ABOUT IT. BUT THERE WAS NO MENTIONING IN THE PAPERS ABOUT IT. IT SEEMED NO ONE KNEW ABOUT THIS, EXCEPT THE CHILD'S FAMILY, THE DOCTOR AND KLARIKA..

I WAS ON MY WAY TO SCHOOL WITH KLARI, WHEN I SAW A VERY

YOUNG GIRL STANDING ON THE SIDEWALK WITH A SOMEWHAT OLDER CHILD. THE YOUNGER ONE WAS SCREAMING AT THE TOP OF HER VOICE. I WENT TO THEM TO ASK THE OLDER GIRL, HER SISTER, WHY WAS SHE SCREAMING, AND SHE HANDED ME A BOTTLE SAYING "SHE DRANK FROM THIS". I SMELLED THE BOTTLE AND IT TOOK MY BREATH AWAY. THE SMELL OF PURE AMMONIA HIT ME. I ASKED KLARIKA TO RUN FOR ANOTHER GIRLFRIEND'S FATHER WHO WAS THE ONLY DOCTOR WITH A CAR AND LIVED CLOSE BY. HE CAME VERY FAST AND TOOK THE LITTLE GIRL TO THE HOSPITAL. SHE DID NOT DIE BUT SHE COULD NOT EAT ANYTHING FOR A YEAR, EXCEPT MILK, BEFORE SHE GOT BETTER.

JUST AFTER THE KILLINGS TOOK PLACE IN JASZBERENY, AND THE WINDOWS WERE BROKEN OF THE JEWS, MY FATHER'S YOUNGEST BROTHER UNCLE IMRE CAME TO VISIT US FROM CSONGRAD, WHERE BY THEN ALL THE RELATIVES LIVED ON MY FATHER'S SIDE.

THE HOMES OF THE JEWISH FAMILIES LOOKED TERRIBLE WITH THE BOARDED UP WINDOWS WHICH WERE BROKEN. SOMEHOW OUR HOME WAS MISSED, THE WINDOWS WERE INTACT. UNCLE IMRE COULD NOT HELP BUT NOTICE IT, AND WHEN MY PARENTS EXPLAINED THAT THE BIGGEST NAZI ORGANIZATION WAS IN OUR TOWN, UNCLE IMRE TALKED MY PARENTS INTO MOVING TO CSONGRAD.

THE MAYOR PIROSKA'S CHILDHOOD LOVE WAS A JEWISH GIRL. HE DID NOT TOLERATE SUCH ORGANIZATION IN CSONGRAD.

THE MAYOR BESIDES BEING ONE, WAS ALSO A WELL KNOWN ARTIST. HE PAINTED LOVELY PICTURES OF THE COUNTRY SIDE. IT ALSO HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH PLANNING A BEAUTIFUL CITY.

WE MOVED TO CSONGRAD AS SOON AS UNCLE IMRE COULD FIND US AN APARTMENT. IT WAS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE CITY, THE SECOND HOUSE FROM THE MAIN STREET, ZSINOR STR. I. THE OTHER END OF OUR STREET WAS WHERE THE TISZA RIVER FLOWED. ONE COULD EMBARK AT MIDNIGHT ON THE RIVERBOAT TO ARRIVE IN THE MORNING IN SZEGED, HUNGARY'S MOST BEAUTIFUL CITY. IN FACT ONE COULD GO WITH THE SAME BOAT AS FAR AS THE BLACK SEA. THE TISZA FLOWED INTO THE DANUBE NOT VERY FAR DOWN FROM SZEGED.

I WONDERED FAR FROM JASZBERENY, AND THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WITH MY GIRLFRIENDS. LET US GO BACK TO JASZBERENY, AND THE. AND LET US GO BACK TO JUTKA MY FRIEND, I LOVED.

SHE WAS FOREVER TEASED BY THE CLASSMATES FOR BEING SLENDER. SHE HATED THAT, AND ALSO DID NOT LIKE THE TEACHER. ONE DAY SHE GOT A BRILLIANT IDEA. SHE TOOK HER FATHER'S MEDICAL BOOK FROM THE SHELF

AND LEARNED THE SYMPTOMS OF APPENDICITIS. SHE PRETENDED TO BE SICK WITH IT.

HER ACTING NOT ONLY CONVINCED THE MD. FATHER, BUT ALSO HER MD. GRANDFATHER, DR NEWMANN. SHE WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL, AN APPENDECTOMY WAS PERFORMED ON THE HEALTHY JUTKA. BY THE TIME THE OPERATION WAS OVER AND THEY LEARNED THAT NOTHING WAS WRONG WITH HER TO BEGIN WITH, SHE HAD AN INFECTION FROM THE OPERATION AND IT ALMOST TOOK HER.

I LEARNED THIS FROM MY MOTHER, WHEN ONE EVENING SHE PUT HER HUNGARIAN PRAYERBOOK IN MY HANDS AND SAID "HERE IS A PRAYER YOU SHOULD PRAY FOR JUTKA . SHE HAD THIS COMPLICATION AND ALMOST DIED FROM IT. THE WHOLE TEMPLE WAS PRAYING FOR HER".....

A WEEK LATER (THIS HAPPENED IN THE WINTER) I PUT ON MY SKATES AND SKATED DOWN THE VERY SHALLOW FROZEN RIVER ZAGYVA TO THE HOSPITAL WITH BY THEN FROZEN ROSE IN MY HAND. THE HOSPITAL ROOM WAS FULL OF RELATIVES, AND THEY WERE A SAD LOOKING BUNCH, AS I SAW THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR, HER AUNT MARCEL TOOK THE FLOWER FROM MY HAND, BUT WOULD NOT LET ME IN. JUTKA GOT OVER HER ADVENTURE VERY SLOWLY, AND SHE CAME BACK TO SCHOOL EVEN SLIMMER.

IT WAS SIX YEARS LATER THAT WE MOVED TO CSONGRAD, AND I DID NOT SEE JUTKA FOR YEARS. I MET HER AND HER MOTHER IN AUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP. JUTKA WAS A BEAUTIFUL GIRL EVEN WITHOUT HAIR. SHE LOOKED LIKE VIVIEN LEIGH. I ALSO MET HER FATHER THERE JUST FOR A MOMENT DR. EMIL STARK WAS MARCHING TROUGH THE LAGER "B 3" ON THE GROUP'S WAY TO CLEAN THE "LATRINA" . THAT WAS THE DOCTORS JOB.

IN SPITE OF MY SHAVEN HEAD HE RECOGNIZED ME AND CALLED TO ME "SHUGY" ONE OF MY NICKNAMES. HE SAID "TELL MY WIFE TO GET OUT OF AUSCHWITZ". WHILE HE SAID THIS, HE WAS LOOKING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE CHIMNEYS BELCHING GREY CLOUDS OF GREAT STINK.

THAT WAS ONE OF THE THINGS THAT MADE ME MORE AWARE, AND MORE SUSPICIOUS OF THE SMOKE.. I WENT TO LOOK FOR THE STARKS AND FOUND JUTKA. I TOLD HER WHAT HIS FATHER SAID. WHEN I LOOKED FOR HER NEXT TIME THEY WERE BOTH GONE.

IT WAS IN 1966 THAT SHE TOLD ME THAT THEY WERE SELECTED FOR WORK NEXT DAY, AND SHIPPED OUT FROM AUSCHWITZ. WHEN THE WAR GOT TOO CLOSE TO THE END, HER GROUP WAS MARCHED DAY AFTER DAY WITHOUT FOOD. THIS WAS CLOSE TO LIBERATION. BUT ZSUZSA AND JUTKA COULD NOT WAIT ANY LONGER, AND ON THE ROAD OF A DEEP FOREST WHEN THEY HAD A SHORT REST, THEY ESCAPED INTO THE WOOD AND HID WHILE THE REST MARCHED ON.

THERE WERE SOME SOLDIERS, WHO SAW THEM AND APPARENTLY DID NOT KNOW WHO THEY WERE, AND MOTIONED THEM TO GO IN ANOTHER DIRECTION.. ZSUZSA AND JUTKA LIVED, HIDING IN THE WOODS UNTIL LIBERATION.

ALL THREE OF THE STARK FAMILY SURVIVED, BUT THE FATHER HAD A KIDNEY PROBLEM AND HE DIED SHORTLY AFTER HIS GRANDDAUGHTER WAS BORN.

WHEN JUTKA WAS A CHILD SHE HAD A VERY PRIVILAGED POSITION, BEING AN ONLY CHILD IN THE FAMILY. HER AUNT MARCELL ADORED HER. JUTKA AND I WENT TO PLACES, AND ON A WINTER DAY WE WENT TO SEE HER GRANDPARENTS. THE NEWMANNS FORGOT TO LOCK THE GATE THAT DAY. WE WALKED IN ON DR. NEWMANN "WRITING" IN THE SNOW.

WE LIKED TO PLAY DOMINOES WITH THE NEWMANN'S LARGE IVORY SET. I SOMEHOW WAS AWED BY THE TOUGHT THAT PEOPLE WOULD ACTUALLY PULL THE TEETH OF THE ELEPHANTS, SO WE HAVE TOYS TO PLAY WITH. IT WOULD NOT EVEN CROSS MY MIND THAT THOSE ROYAL ANYMALS WERE ACTUALLY KILLED FOR IT.

WHEN IN 1966 I WENT BACK TO HUNGARY AND VISITED JUTKA SHE GAVE ME A LOVELY CERAMIC PITCHER, THAT BELONGED TO HER GRANDMOTHER. I DONT KNOW HOW IT SURVIVED. MAYBE MARCELL TOOK IT TO BUDAPEST WITH HER, WHERE SHE WAS HIDING WITH GENTILE PAPERS DURING THE WAR.

The confirmation class in 5700, with the Rabbi in center.

15



Top Magda Dr. Reich Jutta Vera Kati



My Mom's sister Bessie
My Mom and a
nati girlfriend



Peter My Parents Paul



Jen, Klarika's sister.



Jutka with baby



Klarika and husband.



Jutka's husband and daughter Zsuzsika.

Dr. István Kertész
at their Balaton home.

WHEN JUTKA RETURNED TO HUNGARY AFTER LIBERATION, SHE MET A LAW STUDENT, A GENTLEMAN, ISTVAN KERTESZ. THEY WERE IN LOVE AND GOT MARRIED . HE EVENTUALLY BECAME THE CHIEF ADVISOR TO THE SUPREME COURT AMONG OTHER THINGS. HE ALSO WROTE BOOKS ON JUSTICE AND GAVE LAW ADVICE ON TV. HE WAS NOT RELATED TO THE JASZBERENY KERTESZ FAMILY.

I SPENT MY YOUNGEST YEARS IN JASZBERENY. IT WAS A SMALL TOWN, WHERE I LEARNED TO APPRECIATE PLAIN LIVING, THOUGH SOMETIMES NOT AT IT BEST.

MY FONDEST MEMORIES ARE THE AFTER DINNER WALKS WITH MY FAMILY. OUR STREET, FESTO UTCA, WAS LINED WITH ACACIA TREES. IN THE SPRING TIME THE BLOOMS EMITTED THE MOST LOVELY FRAGRANCE ESPECIALLY IN THE EVENING BREEZE. LATER IN THE SPRING AND SUMMER, THE MIXED FLOWERS FRAGRANCE CLOUDS ESCAPED FROM THE GATED GARDENS. EVERYONE HAD A FLOWER GARDEN IN THE RICH EARTH OF THE BACKYARDS. HUNGARY WAS A SEABED BEFORE.

THE PETUNIAS HAD AN EXQUISITE SWEETNESS. AS WE WALKED THE STREETS, THERE WERE CHANGES IN THE AIR AS THE SEASONS CHANGED. TO TOP THESE LOVELY FEELINGS, THE BILLIONS OF STARS SPARKLED, AND IN THE FALL , FALLING STARS RACING IN THE SKIES WERE A DAILY OCCURENCE.. THESE WERE ALL MAGIC FOR A CHILD TAKING WALKS AT NIGHT, HER PARENTS HOLDING HER HANDS ON BOTH SIDE, AND OCCASIONALLY LIFTING

HER UP IN THE AIR "TO FLY". AND SOMEHOW I WAS AWARE OF THE MAGIC AT THAT TIME AND SIXTYSOME YEARS LATER THESE MAGICAL FEELINGS ARE STILL WITH ME, WHEN I THINK OF MY PARENTS.

PEOPLE WHO DID NOT GO TO WALK ON THE "CORSO" WERE SITTING OUTSIDE THE GATES AFTER SPRINKLING THE SIDEWALK AN "8" PATTERN WITH A HANDSPRINKLER. AN EXCHANGE OF GREETING TOOK PLACE.

UP THE STREET THERE WAS A COUPLE, ALWAYS IN BLACK OUTFITS. THE ARVAI FAMILY DID NOT GO FOR WALKS, BUT NEVER FAILED TO SIT OUTSIDE. WEATHER PERMITTING. THERE WERE SOME RUMORS THAT MRS ARVAI SLEPT IN A CASKET, THAT SHE BOUGHT TO GET USED TO THE IDEA.

STILL A LITTLE FURTHER WAS THE HOME OF THE BALINTS. THEY WERE FOREVER BUILDING SOMETHING. A NEW HOUSE, A WINE CELLAR.. I REMEMBER "UNCLE" BALINT IN WHITE COAT, TESTING THE NEW WINE, THAT PEOPLE WANTED TO BUY HIM. HIS WIFE "AUNT" ILONKA WAS A SWEET PERSON WHO ALWAYS HAD SOMETHING IN HER HANDS, MOSTLY KNITTING NEEDLES TO WORK ON.

THE BALINTS SON JOHN MY FRIEND AND SKATE MATE HAD SOME RABBITS. THEY WERE NOT SAFE IN THE BACKYARD WHERE HORSECARRIAGES WERE COMING AND GOING IN AND OUT THE GATE. HE BROUGHT THEM OVER TO OUR HOME, WHERE THEY LIVED IN THE WOODSHED BURROWING AND BUILDING A NEST, UNTIL SOMEONE STOLE THEM ON EASTER DAY. BUT NOT BEFORE MY

BROTHER VILI TOOK SNAPSHOTS OF US WITH THE RABBITS.

ON WEEKDAYS WE WENT TO THE "CORSO" BUT COME SATURDAY AFTER-
NOON WE TOOK A LONGER WALK IN THE DIRECTION OF THE " BARATOK" PARK.
BARATOK MEANS FRIENDS, WHICH WAS CALLED THAT, BECAUSE THE BROWN-
ROBED MONKS LIVED IN THAT AREA. THEY DID THE CHARITY WORK FOR THE
CHURCH. THEY WERE DEDICATED TO HELP THE POOR.

THERE WAS ALSO A MIGHTY LOOKING CHURCH THERE, WITH VERY
THICK WALLS COVERED WITH IVY. ONLY THE STAINED GLASS WINDOWS WERE
FREE FROM THE GROWTH. THE CHURCH WAS FROM BEFORE TURKISH TIMES AND
THE TURKS USED IT FOR KEEPING THEIR HORSES THERE, UNTIL THEY WERE
ENCOURAGED TO GO HOME BY THE HUNYADYS AFTER HUNDRED FIFTY YEARS OF
OCCUPATION.. COUNTING THEIR LOSSES THEY LEFT. THE CHURCH WAS
RESTORED TO ITS FORMER BEAUTY..

WE ALSO WALKED TO THE MARGIT ISLAND. THERE IS ONE IN BUDA-
PEST BY THE SAME NAME, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DANUBE RIVER. THIS ONE
IN JASZBERENY WAS THE ISLE OF THE ZAGYVA RIVER. I WAS TREATED TO
RASPBERRY SODA THERE WHICH WAS SERVED WITH REAL STRAW, STRAIGHT
FROM THE WHEATFIELDS. WE WERE SITTING UNDER ANCIENT TREES. ABOVE
US FLOCKS OF YELLOW ROBINS SANG THEIR HEARTS OUT, AS THE HUNGARIANS
SAY, AS THEY ZIGZAGGED AMONG THE BRANCHES OF THE STATELY WILD CHESTNUT
TREES. THEY WERE NOT DISCOURAGED BY THE COMPETING GYPSY MUSIC BELOW.

WE MET MY PARENTS FRIENDS THERE, WHO ALSO CAME TO ENJOY THE BEAUTY THIS PLACE OFFERED.

THERE WAS A CEMETERY, WHEN WE WALKED FURTHER DOWN THE ROAD. IT WAS NEAR THE CHURCH. TURKISH AND HUNGARIAN SOLDIERS SLEPT THERE SINCE TURKISH TIMES, THOSE WHO WERE KILLED, FIGHTING ON THAT SPOT, IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY. THERE WAS A MEMORIAL, SAYING: "TURKS AND HUNGARIANS AGAINST EACH OTHER FIGHTING IN HATRED, NOW LAY HERE, BECOMING DUST TOGETHER IN PEACE!"

IT WAS DARK WHEN WE WALKED HOME, ENJOYING THE BILLIONS OF RADIANT STARS, SPICED WITH THE CRICKETS AND FROGS CONCERT, THAT CAME ON THE WINGS OF THE WIND FROM THE NEARBY SMALL LAKES, THAT SURROUNDED THE CITY.

AT NINE OCLOCK THE SOUND OF BUGLE FLOATED IN THE AIR FROM THE SOLDIERS BARRACKS. IT WAS TIME TO GO TO SLEEP IN A SMALL TOWN TO THE SONGS OF THE SUMMER NIGHT'S MUSIC.

WINTERTIME WAS AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT STORY. THE WINDS WERE THE MUSICIANS OF THE SNOW COVERED LANDSCAPE..WE CHILDREN LOVED THE SNOW AND MY FATHER AND VILI TAUGHT ME TO SKATE AND PETER TAUGHT ME HOW TO BIKE IN JUST ONE HOUR. I WAS SIX YEARS OLD AT THAT TIME.

AGI SIPOS AND FAMILY LIVED NEXT TO THE BALINTS. THE GIRLS, BOTH AGI AND ZSUZSI WERE IN THE SAME CLASS, ONLY THREE YEARS AHAED. ZSUZSI OR SUSAN WAS THE MOST POPULAR GIRL EVEN IN THE NUNNERY WHERE WE BOTH WENT.

SHE HAD A HARD TIME DURING THE WAR NOT KNOWING WHAT WAS REALLY HAPPENING TO HER FAMILY IN HUNGARY.. AGI'S AND HER FAMILYS STORY WAS VERY DIFFERENT AS SHE RELATED TO ME AFTER THE WAR..HERE GOES WHAT SHE TOLD ME:

IT WAS IN EARLY MARCH IN 1944 THAT ONE LATE EVENING THERE WAS SOMEONE KNOCKING ON THE DOOR, SHE SAID. MY FATHER WENT TO OPEN IT. HE RECOGNIZED HER RIGHT AWAY, IN SPITE OF THE CHANGE.SHE WAS OUR LIVE-IN CLEANING GIRL YEARS AGO. SHE HAD COME TO WARN US TO GET OUT OF THE CITY AND LIVE WITH FALSE PAPERS SHE SAID,SHE WORKED IN BUDAPEST IN A HOUSEHOLD WHERE NAZI MEETINGS TAKE PLACE WEEKLY, AND THEY TALK ABOUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE JEWS. SHE SAID, SHE HAS THE PAPERS OF A GENTILE FAMILY WHO DIED IN A CAR ACCIDENT. WE CAN USE THE PAPERS. SHE ALSO KNEW ABOUT AN APARTMENT IN BUDAPEST THAT WE COULD RENT AND LIVE THERE AS GENTILES.

MY PARENTS KNEW THAT THIS GIRL WAS TELLING FACTS.

WE STARTED TO DISCUSS DETAILS WITH THE GIRL RIGHT AWAY, ABOUT THE APARTMENT'S WHEREABOUTS, THE POSSIBILITY OF DISCOVERY, THE FOODSTAMP SITUATION. SHE MUST HAVE WORKED THIS OUT IN MINUTE DETAIL, FOR SHE HAD THE ANSWER READY FOR ALL THE QUESTIONS THAT DAD ASKED. SHE EVEN ARRANGED TRANSPORTATION. WE COULD GO WITH HER

BROTHER'S FRIEND, ON HIS TRUCK, AND ON ARRIVAL GO TO THE POLICE STATION TO REGISTER ON OUR NEW NAMES. MY FATHER WOULD GET A JOB, AND NOW LISTEN, SHE SAID WE COULD ALWAYS DEPEND ON HER, IF NOT MORE BUT FOR OUR DAILY BREAD FOR SURE. THIS WAS SO NICELY SAID. DONT FORGET THERE WAS A BREAD SHORTAGE AT THAT TIME.

WHEN SHE LEFT WE COULD NOT TALK FIRST FROM THE SHOCK. SLOWLY WE REGAINED OUR VOICES, AND WE WERE GIVING QUESTIONS TO ONE ANOTHER, AS IF ONE OF US KNEW MORE. MY MOTHER RECOVERED FASTEST. SHE PROVED TO BE A PERFECTLY COMPOSED PERSON FROM THAT TIME ON. WE NEVER HEARD ANOTHER COMPLAINT FROM HER MOUTH UNTIL THE WAR WAS OVER. IT TURNED OUT THAT SHE DID NOT MIND LOOSING ANYTHING "AS LONG AS WE STAY TOGETHER". SHE, AS WE LEARNED-ONLY TREASURED US, THE FAMILY, AND BEING TOGETHER.

EVERYTHING WAS ARRANGED, AND ONE DAY EARLY IN THE MORNING A TRUCK PULLED UP IN FRONT OF OUR HOME. WE WERE PACKED AND WE THREW IN OUR SUITCASES IN A HURRY, LOCKED THE DOOR, AND LEFT FOR THE UNKNOWN.

MY MOTHER DID NOT LOOK BACK BUT I DID, WITH DISPAIR IN MY HEART. I LOOKED BACK, TURNING AROUND, AWAY FROM MY PARENTS, SO THEY COULD NOT SEE THE TEARS WELLING UP ^{IN} MY EYES AND RUNNING DOWN MY FACE.

IT TOOK US JUST TWO HOURS TO ARRIVE AT OUR NEW "HOME", THAT PROVED TO BE A FAIRLY WELL KEPT APARTMENT OF A MIDDLE CLASS FAMILY. WE PAID THE DRIVER AND SAID GOOD BYE TO HIM, HOPING HE DID NOT KNOW ABOUT US. THEN WE PARTED WITH "OUR GIRL" WHO CAME WITH US ON THE TRUCK, ON THE WAY BACK TO HER WORKPLACE.

WHEN WE WERE LEFT ALONE WE STARTED TO STUDY OUR NEW I.D. PAPERS, REHEARSING IT OVER AND OVER AGAIN. THEN WE WENT TO THE POLICE STATION TO REGISTER. WE JUST HAD TO FILL OUT PAPERS AND NO ONE ASKED ANYTHING. SO A BIG STEP WAS DONE TO POSSIBLY SAVE OUR LIVES. THERE WAS ONE MORE THING TO DO. WE HAD TO PICK UP OUR RATION CARDS. THAT TOO WENT SMOOTHLY. BY THE TIME WE GOT HOME THE FOUR OF US (MIMI MY SISTER) WERE SHAKING FROM THE SUPRESSED TENSION. WE HAD TO START TO TALK, MAKING PLANS ABOUT OUR FUTURE BEHAVIOR.

WE DECIDED THAT WHEN WE MEET SOMEONE IN THE HOUSE WE WILL INTRODUCE OURSELVES. WE WILL GREET EVERYONE IN THE MANNER OF NEWCOMERS. DAD WILL LOOK FOR WORK. HE HAD A MERCHANT'S "DYPLOMA". SINCE SO MANY YOUNG MEN WENT TO WAR THERE WAS A SHORTAGE OF MEN POWER. IF HE COULD NOT FIND A JOB AS A MERCHANT, HE SAID HE WILL TAKE JUST ANY KIND OF WORK. HE WAS OVER DRAFTING AGE AS A GENTILE, BUT NOT AS A JEW.

I DECIDED TO STUDY TO BECOME A FLORIST. MIMI WENT RIGHT AWAY TO APPRENTICE HAT MAKING. I WENT TO LOOK FOR A JOB. MOM OF COURSE WOULD "DO THE HOUSE", WHICH THE GIRL DID BEFORE.

MY MOM PROVED TO BE A PERSON OF GREAT STRENGTH WHEN NEEDED. WE DID NOT KNOW HER FROM THIS SIDE. NOW SHE WAS READY TO SUPPORT US EMOTIONALLY. HER WEAKNESSES AND HEADACHES DISAPPEARED OVERNIGHT. SHE NEVER COMPLAINED OF ANYTHING.

MY FATHER HAD A DIFFICULT TIME TO FIND A JOB. AND WE HAD SOME DIFFICULTIES WHEN PEOPLE ASKED US EVEN FRIENDLY QUESTIONS. A NEIGHBOR GIRL ASKED ME TOO SOON WHY DID WE MOVE?. I GAVE HER AN INADEQUATE REPLY. THEN I ASKED MY MOTHER WHAT SHALL I SAY, WHEN PEOPLE ASK ME QUESTIONS LIKE THAT?.

WE AGREED THAT WE MOVED, SINCE THE OWNER NEEDED THE HOUSE WE LIVED IN (IT WAS OUR HOUSE),FOR THE DAUGHTER WHO GOT MARRIED.

THE ONLY PROBLEM WE DID NOT HAVE WAS MONEY PROBLEMS. WE HAD CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF SAVED MONEY, THAT COULD PULL US TROUGH FOR A LONG TIME,IF DAD GOT A JOB. WE ALSO MODIFIED OUR WAY OF LIFE, TO MAKE IT REALLY SIMPLE.

OUR EX SERVING GIRL CAME TO VISIT US OCCASIONALLY, AFTER SHE HAD BEEN BACK TO JASZBERENY FOR A WEEKEND, ALWAYS BRINGING US

SOMETHING, MOSTLY FRUIT FROM THEIR FIELDS, FRESH AND SELECTED WITH CARE, BEAUTIFUL. SHE ALWAYS ASKED IF WE NEEDED ANYTHING.

SHE WAS THE MOST WELCOME GUEST AND THE ONLY ONE, AND WAS TREATED AS SUCH. WE STILL HAD IT GOOD, AND DID NOT NEED TO ASK FOR ANYTHING FROM HER. OF COURSE WE WOULD NOT ASK HER TO BRING THINGS FROM OUR HOME FOR FEAR SHE WOULD BECOME SUSPICIOUS AND SHE WOULD LEAD SOMEONE TO US. BUT AS TIME WENT BY I STARTED TO MISS THINGS, HOPING THAT SOON, ONE OF THESE DAYS, THE WAR WILL BE SUDDENLY OVER, AND I WILL WALK BACK INTO MY ROOM, BACK HOME, AND START ALL OVER WHERE I LEFT OFF.

TIME WENT BY AND WE WERE SET IN OUR NEW ROLES. BUT IT WAS HARD TO BEAR, TO KNOW, THAT NEW AND NEWER LAWS LIMITED OTHER JEWS FROM LIVING FREELY AS THEY WERE ENTITLED TO, AS ANY OTHER HUMAN BEINGS. WE IDENTIFIED WITH THEM, AND FELT GUILTY, EVEN WHEN WE SAW PEOPLE ON THE STREETS WEARING STARS. I FELT LIKE TELLING THEM, THAT I, TOO, AM A JEW. BUT I JUST LOWERED MY HEAD, SO I WOULD NOT GIVE AWAY MYSELF WITH THE LOOK IN MY EYES..

OUR DAYS WERE DESPARATELY LONG IN OUR SEPARATEDNESS. WE DID NOT DARE TO MAKE FRIENDS, LEST WE GIVE AWAY OUR SECRET BY ACCIDENT. I FELT LIKE I WAS IN PRISON IN MY UNDESERVED FREEDOM. ALSO I FELT LIKE I WAS A SELF IMPOSED OUTCAST.

I WAS A YOUNG GIRL, WHO WANTED TO DO ALL THE THINGS, THAT OTHER GIRLS DID MY AGE. I FELT DEPRIVED OF MY LIVING RIGHTS AS A YOUNG PERSON. I FELT THAT LIFE WAS VERY CRUEL TO ME. WHEN A BOY LOOKED AT ME I TURNED MY EYES AWAY, SO NOT TO ENCOURAGE HIM. WHAT IF I FELL IN LOVE? AND HE LEARNS THE TRUTH? WE COULD ALL GO TO JAIL FOR THE FALSE PAPERS, OR WORSE. WHEN I WENT TO LOOK FOR A JOB, I ALWAYS HOPED THAT I WOULD NOT GET ONE. I BECAME SCARED OF THE WORLD, AND I DID NOT GET A JOB. THE PEOPLE WHO INTERVIEWED ME MUST HAVE FELT THAT I AM NOT VERY ENTHUSIASTIC TO GET THAT JOB. EVENTUALLY I JUST STAYED HOME WITH MY MOTHER, AND STARTED TO LEARN TO COOK AND BAKE FROM HER. I DID NOT REALISE HOW ENJOYABLE IT IS TO COOK. SHE WAS SUPERB WHEN IT CAME TO BAKING. WHILE LEARNING THIS WE GOT EVEN CLOSER TO ONE ANOTHER.

I USED TO BE TOGETHER WITH MY FATHER AND PLAY WITH HIM A LOT MORE WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, AND I FELT CLOSER TO HIM. THIS WAS A VERY WELCOME DEVELOPMENT IN MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY MOM.

THE RATIONED FOOD HAD TO BE ENOUGH, SO WE USED EVERY KIND OF TRICKS TO OUTSMART THE SHORTAGE. OFTEN WE WOULD BAKE CAKES FROM CARROTS THAT WERE VERY FINELY GRATED. THERE WAS A BLACKMARKET FOR EVERYTHING BUT WE AVOIDED THAT, FOR FEAR OF BEING CAUGHT AND THE POSSIBLE COSEQUENCES.

THE CARROT REPLACED SUGAR AND EGG YOLK. WE WERE SHORT ON THOSE ITEMS. WE ADJUSTED OUR NEEDS TO THE SITUATION. (WELL WHAT WAS THE OTHER CHOICE?) AND WE WERE KIND OF HAPPY.

IT HAPPENED ONE MORNING WHEN MY FATHER JUST LEFT FOR WORK, THAT SOMEONE RANG THE BELL. WONDERING WHO COULD IT BE I WENT TO ANSWER IT. A YOUNG GIRL WAS STANDING AT THE DOOR IN THE DARK HALLWAY. WHEN I OPENED THE SMALL WINDOW TO LOOK, I DID NOT SEE MUCH OF HER, BUT SHE HAD A VERY DETERMINED WAY OF TELLING ME, THAT I SHOULD LET HER IN. BY THAT TIME MY MOM CAME OUT FROM THE KITCHEN AND FLIPPED ON THE LIGHT, THE SECOND I OPENED THE DOOR. WE WERE FROZEN FOR A MINUTE, ALL THREE OF US. THE GIRL, ERZSIKE, AND I JUST TOOK ONE LOOK AT EACH OTHER. I SAW HER EYES WIDEN IN DISBELIEF AND SO DID MINE. WE LOOKED VERY SIMILAR.

MY MOTHER TOOK THIS ALL IN, AND IT WAS SHE WHO BROKE THE SPELL. SHE WAS GOING TO SAY SOMETHING AND ALREADY SOME SOUNDS CAME OUT OF HER MOUTH, BUT THE YOUNG GIRL STARTED TO TALK VERY FAST CUTTING OFF MY MOTHER...SHE SAID "PLEASE CLOSE THE DOOR AND LETS GO IN". WHEN WE WENT INTO THE INNER ROOM, SHE STARTED TO TALK IN A HURRIED WAY. SHE SAID " MY MOTHER SENT ME TO WARN YOU NOT TO GO OUT ON THE STREET THIS WEEK AT ALL, BECAUSE PEOPLE WILL BE STOPPED AND IDENTIFIED. THE NAZIS ARE GOING TO LOOK FOR JEWS IN HIDING AND FOR THOSE NOT WEARING THE STARS. THEY WILL STOP PEOPLE RANDOMLY."

SHE SAID HER MOTHER WANTS TO KNOW, IF WE NEEDED ANYTHING, ~~SHE~~ WOULD GET US WHAT WE NEEDED. WE SHOULD JUST STAY PUT, DONT GO OUT, STAY HOME.. MY MOTHER THANKED HER AND FOR HER COMING TO WARN US. AND SHE TOLD HER THAT WE HAD ALL THAT WE NEEDED. ERZSIKE TOOK HER LEAVE FAST, AND WE JUST STOOD THERE LOOKING AT THE DOOR, WHERE SHE WENT TROUGH, NOT DARING TO SAY A WORD. THE GIRL DID NOT HAVE TO SAY WHO SHE WAS, SHE WAS MY SISTER. I KNEW IT THE MINUTE I LOOKED AT HER. SHE KNEW IT TOO.. I SAW THE SURPRISE IN HER EYES, AND OF COURSE MY MOTHER WAS NOT BLIND. I CANNOT IMAGINE WHAT WENT TROUGH MY MOTHER'S HEAD, OR WAS SHE AWARE OF IT? I LIKED THE IDEA OF HAVING AN OTHER SISTER BESIDES MIMI, WHO IS HELPING US IN OUR NEED TO SURVIVE.

WE KEPT OUR FATHER HOME THE REST OF THE WEEK. MY MOM CALLED THE WORKPLACE TO SAY THAT HE CAME DOWN WITH HIGH TEMPERATURE. NEXT DAY SHE CALLED AGAIN, AND THE EMPLOYER SOUNDED HAPPY HE STAYED HOME, INSTEAD OF TAKING THE GERMS TO HIM.

WE LEARNED ABOUT THE NEXT FEW DAYS HAPPENING THROUGH THE NEWSPAPERS. THEY WERE SHOWING PHOTOS OF PEOPLE WHO WERE " HIDING" THE STAR. MAYBE ACCIDENTALLY. I SAW AN OLD WOMAN'S PICTURE HOLDING A SHOPPING BAG IN BOTH OF HER HANDS, HUGGING IT.. IT PARTLY COVERED THE STAR.

THESE PEOPLE WERE INPRISONED, FOR THEY SEEMED TO WANT TO PASS FOR NON JEWS. TIMES WERE HARD FOR JEWS, BUT THAT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING. WHEN THE " RAZZIA " FOR JEWISH STARS WERE OVER AND THINGS CALMED DOWN WE VENTURED OUT AGAIN TO DO SOME SHOPPING. MY MOM AND I WENT OUT WITH THE SHOPPING BASKETS, AND ALL OF A SUDDEN A WOMAN WAS COMING IN OUR DIRECTION. WE COULD SEE ON HER THAT SHE DID NOT WISH TO BE RECOGNIZED. SHE WAS ANOTHER JEW FROM OUR CITY MINUS YELLOW STAR. WE WERE SO HAPPY TO SEE HER. SHE WAS MARCELL LENGYEL JUTKA'S AUNT.

IT FELT VERY GOOD THAT WE WERE NOT THE ONLY PEOPLE FROM JASZBERENY WHO HAD BEEN HELPED, AND THAT MADE US VERY HAPPY. WHEN WE WENT OUT WE USED THE SAME STREET AND SAME HOURS. SHE MUST HAVE HAD THE SAME IDEA, FOR SOME DAYS SHE DID APPEAR WALKING THERE AT THAT TIME. SHE TOO MUST HAVE BEEN HOMESICK FOR FAMILIAR FACES. WHEN WE JUST LET OUR EYES MEET FOR A SECOND, EVEN THAT WAS ENOUGH TO MAKE US FEEL BETTER FOR THE REST OF THE DAY.

AS THE WAR ADVANCED, THE JEWS OF BUDAPEST WERE HERDED INTO THE GHETTOS. WE DID NOT HAVE NEWS ABOUT THIS. THE NEWSPAPERS DID NOT SAY WHAT TERRIBLE CONDITION THEY WERE EXPOSED TO THERE. I GUESS THEY WERE NOT PROUD OF IT AFTER ALL...

TOO MANY PEOPLE DIED IN THE GHETTO AS I LEARNED AFTER THE WAR. STILL OTHERS WERE TORTURED IN OTHER PARTS OF THE CITY AND SHOT INTO THE DANUBE FROM THE BANKS.

THOSE WHO HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE TO ESCAPE THE SHOT, AND JUMPED, TOLD THE STORY. I HAD A GENTILE FRIEND WHO RELATED TO ME , THAT SHE LIVED ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE NAZI HEADQUARTERS, ON THE FIFTH FLOOR AND COULD SEE WHAT HAPPENED INSIDE THE GATES OF THE BUILDING OF THE NAZI PLACE. SHE SAID SHE WATCHED DAY BY DAY FROM HER WINDOW HOW THE JEWS WERE TORTURED.

SHE WATCHED!!!!!!

WE DID NOT DARE TO ASK ANYONE ABOUT THE NEWS, THAT THE PAPERS DID NOT WRITE, BUT WE KNEW, THAT THE JEWS OF JASZBERENY WERE REMOVED FROM THE CITY TO AN UNKNOWN PLACE. WE WERE WORRIED AND WONDERING ABOUT THE REST OF OUR FAMILIES AND THE REST OF THE JEWS. WE DID NOT DARE TO CONTACT FAMILY MEMBERS IN OTHER CITIES AND WERE VERY DEPRESSED BY THEN. BUT WE HAD AN OTHER SURPRISE MEETING WITH MY MOTHER'S COUSIN WE DID NOT KNOW ABOUT. IT WAS HARDER THIS TIME TO CONCEAL OUR JOY. ONLY AT WAR END DID WE LEARN HOW SHE AND FAMILY SURVIVED .THIS MEETING HAPPENED AROUND X-MAS TIME AND WE WERE LIBERATED BY THE RUSSIANS IN EARLY JANUARY. THIS WAS AGI'S STORY SHE TOLD ME.

AGI AND HER FAMILY SURVIVED WITHOUT BEING DISCOVERED..AGI GOT HER CHEMISTRY DOCTORATE AFTER THE WAR AND WAS TEACHING AT A UNIVERSITY IN BUDA. SHE MENTIONED TO ME THAT SHE OFTEN USED MY COUSIN'S BOOKS FOR REFERENCE, WHO ALSO HAD A DOCTORATE IN SAME AND WAS TEACHING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SZEGED. HER HUSBAND WAS ALSO TEACHING THERE, WHOSE NAME WAS DR. ANDREW BIRO. WHEN MY COUSIN DR. EDITH SUGAR WAS PROMOTED AND ANDREW WAS NOT, SHE QUIT HER JOB AND WENT INTO RESEARCH. IN LATER YEARS SHE WORKED FOR THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION. W.H.O.

HER WORK WAS BRINGING TOGETHER AND SUMMERIZING THE RESEARCH THAT WAS DONE ALL AROUND THE WORLD. IT WAS ABOUT THE FLOURIDS' EFFECT ON THE BONES AND THE TEETH.

WHEN I WENT TO HUNGARY I ALWAYS MET AGI AND HER SISTER MIMI. I FELT CLOSER TO AGI AND WE JUST COULD NOT STOP TALKING. AGI IS GONE. BUT HER SISTER STILL LIVES IN BUDAPEST. ERZSIKE ALSO DIED SINCE.

WHILE THOSE WHO WERE IN HIDING SUFFERED FROM KNOWING WHAT HAPPENED TO OTHERS, SUSAN IN AMERICA WAS DESPARATE FROM NOT KNOWING WHAT WAS GOING ON WITH HER FAMILY. AT THE END OF THE WAR SHE WAS EVEN WORSE OFF. ONLY JOHN SURVIVED THE HOLOCAUST.

FOR SOME REASON IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO COME TO HIS SISTER, SINCE HE WENT FIRST TO ALASKA. WHEN HE MET THERE AN AMERICAN GIRL AND THEY GOT MARRIED, THEY MOVED TO NEW YORK.

UNFORTUNATELY THE MARRIAGE DID NOT WORK OUT AND A DIVORCE TOOK PLACE A FEW YEARS LATER. RUTHY, JOHN'S SECOND WIFE IS A TALENTED SCULPTOR. JOHN WAS HAPPY TO BE CLOSE TO HIS BELOVED SISTER, WHO LIVED AND STILL LIVES IN NEW JERSEY JUST A SHORT RIDE AWAY FROM JOHN AND RUTHY'S HOME.

IT WAS HARD ON SUSAN TO HEAR FIRST-HAND STORIES FROM JOHN. THE WORLD COULD NOT BELIEVE THE HAPPENINGS DURING THE WAR, UNTIL THE ARMY FILMS AND PHOTOGRAPHS WERE RELEASED FROM THE VAULTS AFTER 40 YEARS. THEY WERE OF THE THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS SKELETONS THE ARMY FOUND IN THE LIBERATED CAMPS. THOSE SKELETONS WERE PEOPLE, JUST ONE YEAR BEFORE. AND JASZBERENY HAS NO JEWS FOR A FEW YEARS. WHEN I WAS THERE THE LAST TIME THIRTEEN YEARS AGO, THERE WERE JUST TWO OF THE OLD CROWD I USED TO GO TO TEMPLE WITH. WE WRITE NOW 1999.

I OFTEN HAVE FLASHBACKS IN CONNECTION WITH THE TEMPLE AND THE PEOPLE I MET THERE. I HAVE A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE IN MY MIND OF THE HOLLO FAMILY OF JASZBERENY.. "AUNT" HOLLO WAS THE MOST ELEGANT AND GOOD LOOKING WOMAN IN THE CITY. I USED TO ADMIRE HER WHEN SHE CAME TO THE SERVICES AT THE TEMPLE. SHE AND HER HUSBAND HAD THREE SONS. THEY WERE THE PRIDE OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY.

ANDRIS, THE MIDDLE SON WENT TO THE SAME CLASS WITH MY BROTHER VILI. THEY GRADUATED TOGETHER FROM GYMNASIUM. THEY WERE THE BEST STUDENTS, NOT ONLY IN THEIR CLASS BUT IN THE WHOLE SCHOOL.

Bar Mitzva
picture of
John



George Susan and I.

↑ John



The Hellers.
Wedding picture



Susan and John

MY BROTHER VILI HAD STUDIED FIVE LANGUAGES BY THE TIME OF HIS GRADUATION. THAT WAS BESIDES HUNGARIAN. I WAS AWED BY HIM.

HE WAS SHOT IN BOR CONCENTRATION CAMP IN JUGOSLAVIA. HIS GROUP WORKED IN A STONE QUARRY. HE GOT SICK AND WAS UNABLE TO MARCH OUT TO WORK. A GUNSHOT WAS THE CURE FOR THIS. HE WAS TWENTY THREE YEARS OLD. VILI JOINED THE UNDERGROUND IN FORTY TWO. ON A VISIT HOME HE TOLD MY MOM, THAT WE SHOULD NOT WORRY IF HE DISAPPEARS, BECAUSE HIS GROUP WAS GETTING READY TO GO TO PALESTINE. WE WERE VERY HAPPY ABOUT THIS, BECAUSE MY FATHER, WHO HAD THE HIGHEST MILITARY AWARDS, TWO MEDALS OF KNIGHTHOOD FROM WWI. HAD BEEN ALREADY TAKEN FOR MONTHS TO FORCED LABOR CAMP AND WORKED IN A SANDMINE.^x

MY PARENTS DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE MIGHT HOLD FOR US CHILDREN, AND KNEW BETTER THEN OPPOSE VILI'S PLAN. MY MOM SIGNED ME UP TO A PLAN CALLED " KRAMMER ACTION ". THE ORGANIZATION WAS WORKING ON RESCUING CHILDREN FROM EUROPE, AND ASSIGNING THEM TO JEWISH FAMILIES IN THE USA...THERE WERE TO BE TWO THOUSAND CHILDREN AND THERE WERE TWENTY THOUSAND VOLUNTEERS TO TAKE THEM IN.

VILI'S GROUP WAS DISCOVERED BEFORE THEY COULD MAKE THE MOVE. HE ESCAPED GETTING TAKEN PRISONER BY A MIRACLE. THE PLACE WHERE HE WAS WORKING WAS WORKING OVERTIME THAT EVENING , AND HE COULD NOT ATTEND THE MEETING.

^x IN TISZAFOLDVAR



Vili.



Peter.



Maopla

Andrew Hollos



←
Vili
on
Hebrew
Class

NOT MUCH LATER VILI WAS TAKEN TO LABOR CAMP, EVENTUALLY TO YUGOSLAVIA.

ANDREW HOLLO ALSO JOINED THE UNDERGROUND OF A DIFFERENT KIND. HE WAS USING FALSE PAPERS LIKE THE SIPOS FAMILY. ON THIS UNLUCKY DAY HE WAS RECOGNIZED BY AN OFFICER FROM JASZBERENY, WHO ATTENDED THE SAME GYMNASIUM AS ANDRIS AND VILI. ANDREW BARAT CAPTURED HIM WITH OTHERS, AND HAD THEM EXECUTED. HE DID NOT ESCAPE THE SAME FATE. RIGHT AFTER THE WAR HE WAS EXECUTED FOR THIS CRIME, AND HIS FATHER MADE A REMARK AT THE FUNERAL. "HE GOT WHAT HE DESERVED".

I REMEMBER THE BARAT FAMILY VERY WELL. ANDREW BARAT LOOKED LIKE JOHN WEISMULLER. HIS SISTER ILONKA WAS A BEAUTY. HIS FATHER A VERY STATELY GENTLEMAN. THEY WERE GENTLEMAN FARMERS, WITH LOTS OF FIELDS. WE BOUGHT SOUR CREAM, EGGS FROM THEM AND OTHER PRODUCTS IN SEASON, THAT CAME FROM THEIR FARM.

I WAS STILL A CHILD WHEN MY MOM SENT ME TO SHOP FOR PARSELY. I HAD TO PASS THEIR HOME ON THE WAY BUT BEFORE I GOT THERE I NOTICED A BIG CROWD IN FRONT OF THEIR GATE. THE GATE WAS OPEN, AND AS I LOOKED IN I SAW THE MAIDS WASHING A LARGE ORIENTAL RUG AT THE WELL. THE BLODY WATER WAS GUSHING TOWARD THE STREET.

I LEARNED, THAT ILONKA THE BEAUTIFUL DAUGHTER , HAD BEEN SHOT DEAD THAT NIGHT BY AN OFFICER OF THE ARMY. HE COMMITTED SUICIDE SAME NIGHT IN THE HOTEL "LEHEL". THIS HAPPENED BECAUSE SHE REFUSED TO MARRY HIM.

Hivatalos feljegyzések:
1944 aug. 16.
ELLENŐRIZVE
Kovács József

A feladó

neve:

rendfokozata:

A tábori posta száma:

Cim.

Singar Manya

Completed

Around 7 o'clock at 35

1. Die Länge des ...
 2. Die ...
 3. Die ...
 4. Die ...
 5. Die ...
 6. Die ...
 7. Die ...
 8. Die ...
 9. Die ...
 10. Die ...

" UNCLE " BARAT WAS HEARTBROKEN (HIS WIFE DIED YEARS BEFORE). HE WENT EVERY DAY, SUMMER, WINTER, TO THE GRAVE OF HIS BELOVED DAUGHTER. THE GRAVE WAS MARKED WITH A STATUE OF A LITTLE GIRL. HE WAS TAKING FLOWERS FOR HER. IT MADE ME SAD EVERY TIME TO SEE HIM GOING WITH A BUNCH OF FROZEN FLOWERS IN WINTERTIME, TAKING IT TO HIS DAUGHTER WHO WAS NO MORE. AND I AM STILL SORRY, THAT HE HAD TO LOSE BOTH HIS CHILDREN IN A TERRIBLE WAY.....

ANDREW BARAT'S NAME WAS BLOTTED OUT BUT ANDREW HOLLO GOT A SQUARE NAMED AFTER HIM IN JASZBERENY. HIS BROTHER DR.JOHN HOLLO STILL LIVES IN BUDAPEST, BUT HIS YOUNGER BROTHER FERI, JUST PASSED AWAY A FEW MONTHS AGO. I AM SORRY TO SAY. THEY ALSO HAD A COUSIN NAMED PISTA DR.HOLLO. I DID NOT SEE HIM FOR 45 YEARS.

THE LAST TIME I WAS IN BUDAPEST AGI TOOK ME TO A CELEBRATION. HER UNCLE WAS HONORED, FOR PRACTICING DENTISTRY FOR 70 years.

PISTA WAS THERE AND I RECOGNIZED HIM.HE WAS LOOKING JUST LIKE WHEN I SAW HIM THE LAST TIME WHEN HE WAS A YOUNG BOY. PISTA WENT TO GRADE SCHOOL WITH ME AND THREE MORE YEARS TO HEBREW SCHOOL.

WHEN HE HAD ONE OF HIS BIRTHDAY PARTIES, HE LED US TO THE HORSESHED, TO INTRODUCE US TO "GEORGE " THE STORK. I WROTE A STORY ABOUT THIS BIRD FOR MY CHILDREN. THE STORK WAS BROUGHT TO PISTA'S FATHER (DR.HOLLO) WITH A BROKEN WING. BY THE TIME IT WAS HEALED, IT

IT WAS TOO LATE FOR THE STORK TO JOIN HIS FLOCK TO FLY TO AFRICA FOR THE WINTER.

THE HORSES AND THE BIRD BECAME HORSESHED MATES. I GUESS THE HOLLOS FED HIM FISH FROM THE ZAGYVA RIVER, UNTIL THE SPRING MELTED THE ICE, THE FLOCK CAME BACK, AND HE COULD JOIN THEM FOR FROGBURGER IN THE LAKE.

THE ZAGYVA WAS AT TIMES JUST A TRICKLE OF " WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE" , WHEN RAIN WAS SPARSE. BUT IN SPRINGTIME WITH STORMS AND THE SNOW MELTING IN THE MOUNTAINS, THE TRICKLE BECAME A THREATENING FORCE TO THE PEOPLE OF JASZBERENY. WE ALL WENT TO THE WATER'S EDGE TO WATCH HOW THE RIVER GREW. WE SAW FURNITURE, WOODS, CRIB ETC. FLOATING ON THE RIVER IN GREAT HURRY. NO ONE EVER DID ANYTHING ABOUT IT EXCEPT REMARKING HOW MANY CM.S IT GREW SINCE THE DAY BEFORE.

WHEN I WAS VISITING IN 66, THERE WAS, TO MY GREAT SURPRISE AN ALTERNATE CANAL DUG FOR THE ZAGYVA, IN CASE THE CITY WAS TREATENED. LET ME MENTION HERE THAT THE ZAGYVA WAS NOT THE ONLY WATER THREATENING JASZBERENY. WHEN THE TURKS OCCUPIED HUNGARY FOR 150 YEARS, THEY DUG IN, IN JASZBERENY, CONNECTING THE ZAGYVA WITH A CANAL. WHEN THE RIVER WAS SWOLLEN, SO WAS THE CANAL NAMED "CSINCSA". (THAT IS A TURKISH NAME). THE CSINCSA GREW JUST AS DANGEROUSLY AS THE RIVER. NOTHING WAS DONE ABOUT THIS EITHER.

IT HAD NOT BEEN FILLED IN IN THE NEXT 300 YEARS THAT THE TURKS WENT BACK HOME. SMALL FOOTBRIDGES WERE BUILT ACROSS IT INSTEAD. THE CSINCSA WAS THE HOME OF INCREDIBLE NUMBER OF MOSQUITOES AND FROGS, SINCE WHEN THE RIVER WAS LOW THE WATER OF THE CSINCSA DID NOT MOVE.

IN THE YEAR OF 66 THERE WAS JUST A TRICKLE OF WATER IN THE ZAGYVA.. JUST ENOUGH TO NOURISH THE LOVELY WEEPING WILLOWS THOSE WERE LINING THE BANKS OF THE RIVER, AND TOUCHING BRANCHES IN THE MIDDLE HIGH ABOVE THE WATER, IN LOVING EMBRACE.

IN THE SHALLOW WATER ONE COULD SEE THE BABY CARPS THAT WOULD NIBBLE ON ONES TOES, WHEN STEPPED INTO THE WATER FOR A SHORT TIME. I REMEMBER THIS, FOR I WENT TO FISH WITH MY BROTHERS, AND SOAK MY TOES UNTIL THE FISH TICKLED THEM. THE FISH WE GOT WERE ALWAYS TOO TINY. BUT WE LOVED THE IDEA OF TAKING THEM HOME IN AN OLD BLUE AND WHITE MILK CARRIER FULL OF WATER.

43A



Mr. F. J. [unclear] 9/13
[unclear]
with his 2nd "Knight hood" decoration



Uncle Imre

my grandparents, just before the Holocaust.



1917 My dad in the Army.



I.D. just before he was murdered.
1944

IT IS TIME I TALKED ABOUT THE REST OF MY FAMILY.

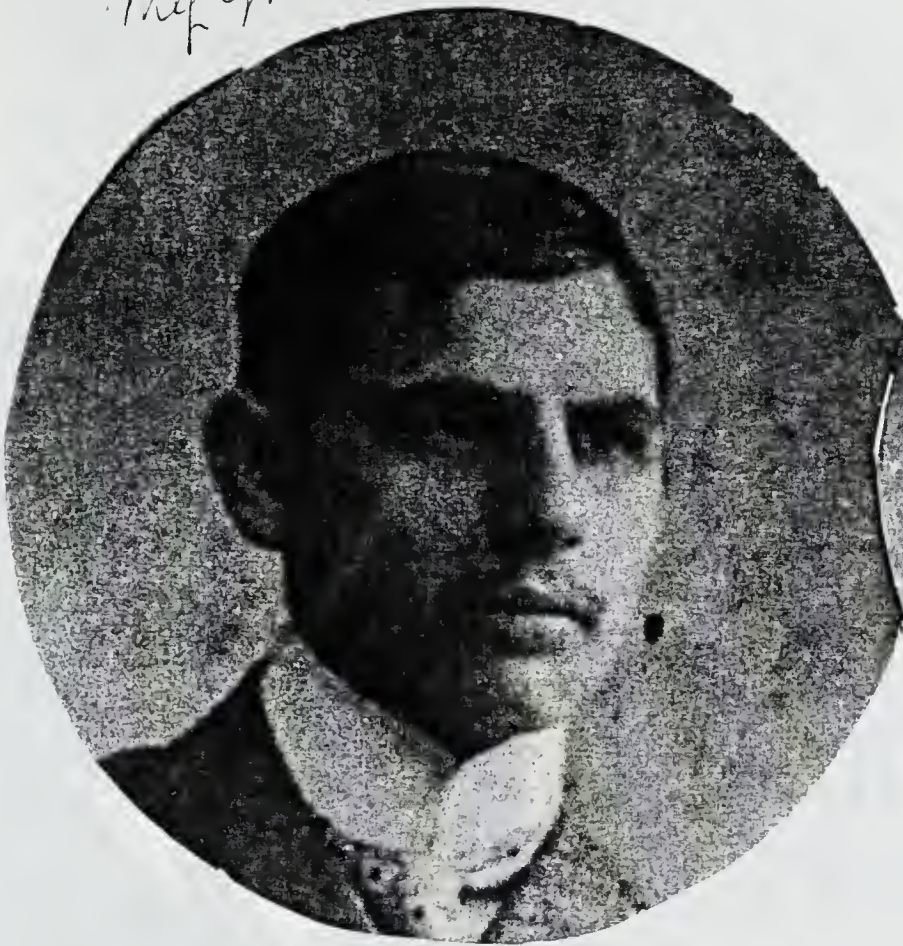
MY FATHER WAS KNOWN AS "THE TAILOR SUGAR".SUGAR SZABO IN HUNGARIAN. IN THOSE TIMES HE COULD NOT USE HIS KNIGHT TITLE. THERE WERE ONLY THREE KNIGHTS IN OUR CITY : KNIGHT KISS KALMAN WHO WAS GIVEN THE NAME "ZAMAR" BEHIND HIS BACK, I DONT KNOW WHY..THERE WAS AGI'S AND MIMI'S UNCLE, AND MY FATHER WHO COULD NOT USE THE TITLE, INSPITE OF HAVING THE MEDAL PINNED ON HIM TWICE. HE HAD TWO OF THOSE MEDALS. HE COULD NOT USE HIS TITLE BECAUSE HE WAS ONLY A SERGANT.

JUST THE SAME WE WERE VERY PROUD OF HIM. LATER THE LAW WAS CHANGED. NOT ONLY HIM,!,BUT ALSO MY CHILDREN INHERITED THE TITLE.

MY MOTHER'S SPANISH NAME GAVE ME EXTRA PRIDE WHEN I . . . LEARNED WHAT KIND OF POSITIONS DID THE JEWS FILLED IN IN SPAIN. UNFORTUNATELY THE INQUISITION PUT AN END TO IT AND MY FOREFATHERS ESCAPED FROM SPAIN, AND EVENTUALLY GOT TO HUNGARY. I WAS TOLD THAT MY GRANDFATHER SPOKE NINE LANGUAGES. HE DIED AT THE AGE OF 54 from LEADPOISONING. HE WAS A SUCCESSFUL INVENTOR AND WORKED HIS MODELS FROM LEAD, BEING A SOFT METAL. IT POISONED HIM, BUT NOT BEFORE HE PUT HIS YOUNGER BROTHER TROUGH MEDICAL SCHOOL.

I DONT KNOW THE VERY ORIGIN OF MY FATHER,BUT HIS MOM WAS FROM VIENNA. HER NAME WAS JOHANNA GOLDSCHMIED. MY GRANDFATHER'S NAME WAS DAVID SUGAR, BUT THE GREATGRANDFATHER'S NAME WAS CHANGED

My Grandfather William Maron



My Grandmother
Johanna Kantor

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My Mom Katalin Maron



Grandfather's Sister
Honka Züch.



Arpad Maron,
my Mother's brother, the architect built this
school.

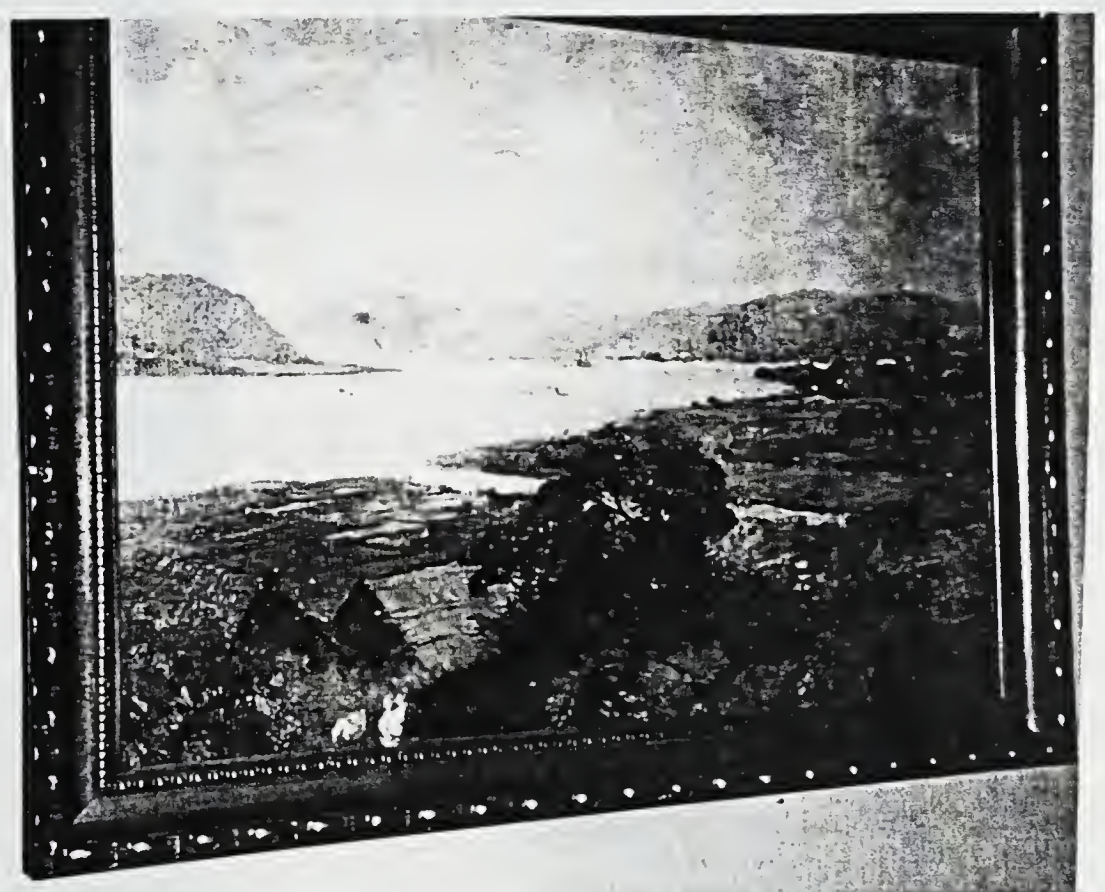


Székesfehérvár építette 1930-ban
his handwriting

Arpadhazy Boldog Margit leányliceum



When in the army.



We inherited this painting
from him.



Grandmother's Sisters: Mariska, Juliska, Katica Kari



My Father's brother: Ernő Sngár.

FROM SCHLASINGER TO SUGAR TO MAKE IT SOUND HUNGARIAN. SUGAR MEANS RAY IN ENGLISH. MY MOTHER'S NAME WAS KATALIN MARON AND HER MOTHER'S JOHANNA KANTOR.

MY BROTHER VILI WAS SIX YEARS OLDER THAN I AND THREE YEARS OLDER THAN PALIKA AND PETER. PALIKA DIED AT THE AGE OF EIGHT MONTHS FROM BLACK POX. IT WAS AN EPIDEMIC. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO DESCRIBE MY BROTHERS QUALITY OF LOVING CARE THAT WAS EXTENDED TO ME TO THEIR "LITTLE SISTER". IT STILL NOURISHES ME, AND MY DAUGHTERS SEEMED TO HAVE INHERITED THE SAME KIND OF LOVE.

MY FAMILY IS GONE , BUT THE FEELINGS REMAIN. THESE LOVING PEOPLE, AND MY AUNTS AND UNCLES..THIRTY NINE PERSONS IN ALL WHOSE NAMES I KNEW, ALL GONE UP IN SMOKE, TROUGH THE CHIMNEYS OF DIFFERENT CONCENTRATION CAMPS. MY FAMILY...EXCEPT MY TWO BROTHERS. THEY WERE SHOT.

BEFORE THE WWII. MY MOTHER HAD TWO BROTHERS, ARPAD AND GEZA, AND ONE SISTER ELISABET. THE SAME PERSON WHO TOLD ME ABOUT MY GRANDFATHER, ALSO TOLD ME THAT MY MOM KNEW BY HEART ALL THE SPEECHES, THOSE WERE GIVEN IN THE PARLIAMENT UP TILL A CERTAIN TIME. I COULD NOT IMAGINE WHY. SHE TOLD ME THAT MY UNCLE ARPAD, WHO WAS AN ARCHITECT, HAD A FEW HOBBIES. ONE OF THEM WAS SHORTHAND OF THE

PARLIAMENT. IT WAS MY MOTHER WHO WAS DICTATING FOR HIM FASTER AND FASTER. HE EVENTUALLY WON THE NATIONAL COMPETITION IN SZEGED. THE PRICE WAS A GOOSEFEATHER PEN MADE OF GOLD. THE OTHER HOBBY WAS MAKING PERSIAN RUG AND KILLIM. IT WAS HIS GIRLFRIEND OF TWENTY YEARS WHO GAVE MY COUSIN ZSUZSI ONE OF THE PIECES THAT HE MADE, TOGETHER WITH AN OILPAINTING.(HE DID NOT PAINT)) WE SHARE USING THESE ITEMS, HAVING SO LITTLE THAT REMAINED. THEY ARE WITH ME NOW IN THE LIVING ROOM.....

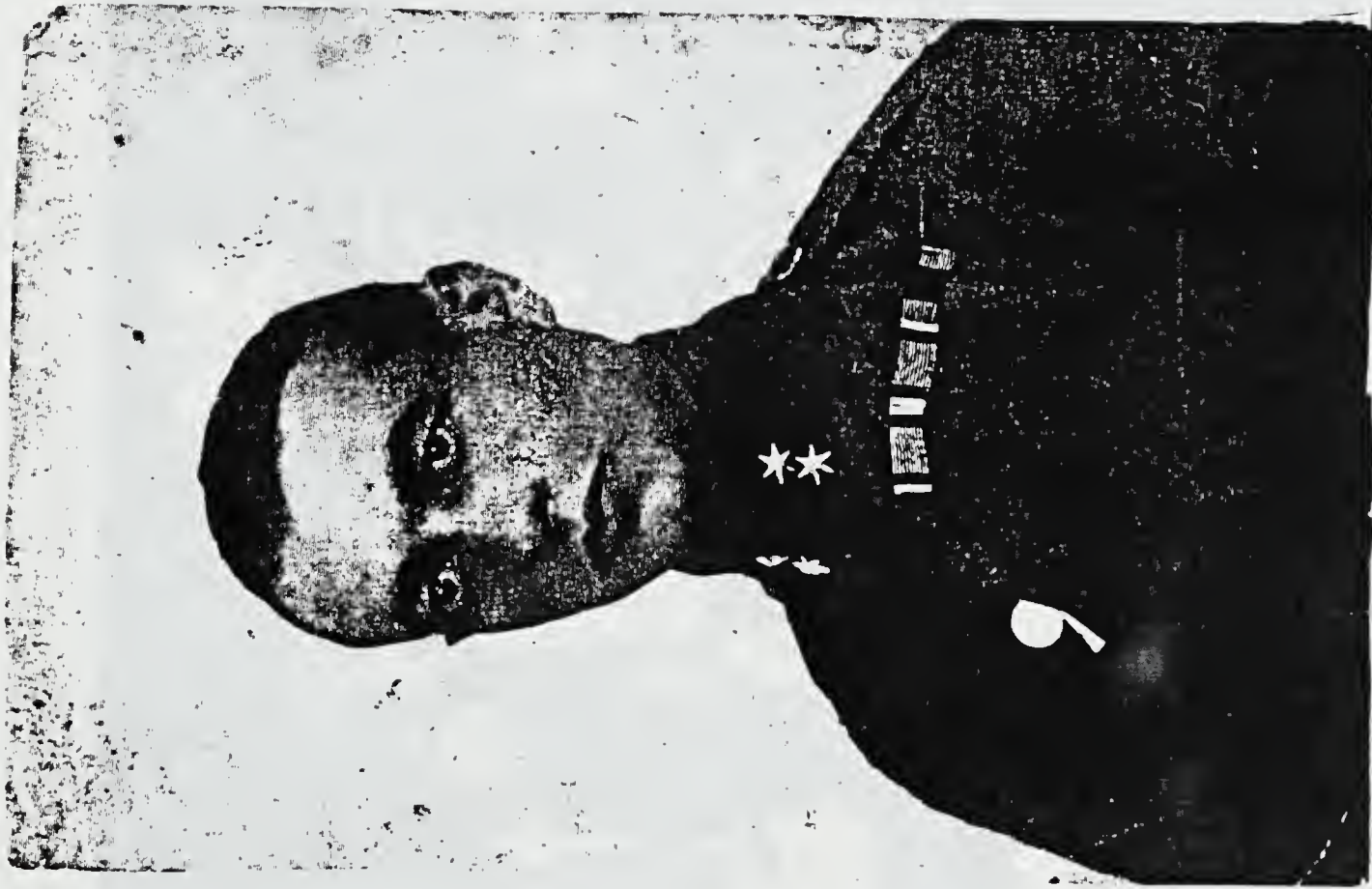
JASZBERENY WAS A " FAMOUS" PLACE. ITS MUSEUM WAS VISITED ON ACCOUNT THE "HORN OF LEHEL". LEHEL WAS A HUNGARIAN CHIEF.

IT CAME ABOUT THAT HE HAD A DISAGREEMENT WITH CONRAD THE AUSTRIAN CHIEF (THEY MUST HAVE HAD THE WRONG INTERPRETER) AND WHEN LEHEL IMPULSIVELY HIT HIM ON THE HEAD WITH THIS HANDCARVED LOVELY IVORY HORN, A PIECE CHIPPED OFF THE HORN, AND THE HORN MADE SUCH A DENT ON CONRAD'S HEAD, THAT HE JUST DIED ON THE SPOT.(THE MAID COULD NOT FIND THE CHIP EVER) I DO NOT KNOW THE YEAR,BUT BOY, IT WAS A VERY LONG TIME AGO .

IN MY TIME , THIS IVORY HORN WAS GUARDED BY A RETIRED PRIEST NAMED "UNCLE" REZ. THE MUSEUM ALSO HAD A CONTAINER FOR AN EGYPTIAN MUMMY SHOULD ONE TURN UP IN JASZBERENY. AND THERE WAS THIS CASE OF GLASS WHICH CONTAINED ONE OF MARIA THEREZIA'S NECKLACE.

"UNCLE" REZ OPENED THE CASE AND LIFTED OUT THE NECKLACE. HE PLACED IT AROUND MY NECK. I FELT THRILLED, UPLIFTED. IT HAPPENED ON A FIELD TRIP FROM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

OUR TEACHER BRUDER LOVED TO TAKE US ON TRIPS. WE WENT TO THE MATRA MOUNTAINS EVERY YEAR WITH A CHARTERED "STROMF" BUS. I HAVE A GROUP PICTURE OF MY FIRST TRIP WITH THE GIRLS OF MY CLASS, AND THE TEACHER. THE BUS DRIVER TOOK IT. OUR TEACHER WAS AN OUTSTANDING ONE, AND WHEN WE TRANSFERRED WE MADE GOOD GRADES.



My Father in 1916. 23 years old
with 2 "knight hood" decorations



My Brother Vili.
I.D. in forced labor camp.



The Play... All of the children of the school were "Actors!"

6-3

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BUT I THINK HE TAUGHT US TO COMPETE TOO MUCH. IT DID NOT WORK FOR ME WITH THE FIFTY ONE GENTILE GIRLS IN MY CLASS IN THE NUNNERY.

BRUDER HAD LOTS OF PLANS TO KEEP US INTERESTED AND ENTERTAINED, BESIDES THE YEARLY TRIPS. HE PRODUCED A PLAY EVERY YEAR AND ALL THE KIDS WERE PLAYERS. IN MY FIRST YEAR I PLAYED CINDERELLA. (SEE PHOTO)

HE TAUGHT US HOW TO BUILD KITES, AND WENT TO THE OPEN FIELDS TO FLY THEM WITH US. IN WINTERTIME HE HAD THE PLAYGROUND FLOODED FOR US FOR SKATING. IN THE SPRING HE TOOK US TO THE ORCHARD BEHIND THE PLAYGROUND AND SHOWED US HOW TO TRIM THE FRUIT TREES.

HE LOVED TO MAKE ME RECITE POETRY SINCE BY THAT TIME I LEARNED A LOT OF BEAUTIFUL POEMS FROM MY MOM. EVA RUTTKAI'S JUMPING BOARD WAS A POEM RECITAL OF THE "HONEY CAKE PEDDLER". BRUDER MADE ME RECITE IT AT THE END OF THE SCHOOLYEAR CEREMONY. I NOTICED PEOPLE WIPING TEARS FROM THEIR EYES WHEN I FINISHED.

EVERY YEAR HE GAVE ME AN AWARD, A BOOK FOR BEING A GOOD STUDENT. I STILL HAVE SOME OF THEM BY A MIRACLE.

POOR BELOVED BRUDER..HIS WONDERFUL WORK AND LIFE WAS FINISHED IN AUSCHWITZ GAS CHAMBER.....

ACROSS FROM OUR SCHOOL WAS THE OFFICE OF DR. HALASZ. KATI GUTTMANN OFTEN ASKED ME TO GO WITH HER TO THE DR. WHEN IT WAS TIME TO CHANGE THE DRESSINGS ON HER LEGS. SHE HAD SOME TUMORS REMOVED WHILE SHE STILL ATTENDED GRADE SCHOOL. KATI'S PARENTS HAD A SHOP ON MAIN STREET. THEY SOLD EMBROIDERY SUPPLYS. WE WERE FOR EVER EMBROIDERING SOMETHING AND HAD TO GO OFTEN TO PICK UP MATERIALS.

THE STORE HAD A FAMILIAR SMELL, THAT GOES WITH THE PRINTING OF THE EMBROIDERY PATTERNS. WE CONTINUED TO GO THERE THROUGH OUR SCHOOL YEARS, FOR WE HAD SEWING AND EMBROIDERY CLASSES TWICE A WEEK EVEN IN THE NUNNERY.

MY HOME ROOM TEACHER'S NAME WAS BALOGH MARIA ASSIOLA. SHE WAS A PETITE SIZE NUN WITH VERY BLACK EYES. BURNING BLACK WHEN SHE WAS ANGRY. ONE DAY SOMEBODY MADE HER VERY ANGRY AND HER EYES WERE GIVING OUT SPARKS. OUR CLASSMATE SZENTKIRALYI TOTTH MARIA WAS VERY PROUD OF HITLER. (HER FATHER WAS A KNOWN NAZI) MARIA WANTED TO SOUND OUT THE JEWISH GIRLS OF OUR CLASS. THERE WAS ANOTHER GIRL WHO WAS HEARD TO SING A JEW BAITING SONG. SOMEONE TOLD ABOUT THESE TO SISTER ASSIOLA. (IT WAS NOT A JEWISH GIRL) THE SISTER PROMISED IN FRONT OF THE CLASS, THAT SHOULD ANYONE DO THIS AGAIN SHE WILL HAVE THE STUDENT TROWN OUT, NOT ONLY FROM OUR SCHOOL BUT ALSO THE SCHOOLS OF ALL HUNGARY. I NEVER FORGOT THIS HAPPENING.

WE HAD A FAMOUS HEAD OF OUR SCHOOL WHO WAS A PAPAL PRELATE AMONG OTHER THINGS. NOW LET ME SEE HOW MANY TITLES DID HE HAVE. HIS NAME WAS DR. KELE ISTVAN, PAPAL PRELATE, APAT, HEAD ESPERES, PLEBANIAN, UPPER HOUSE MEMBER, AND DIRECTOR OF OUR SCHOOL. THERE.

ALSO THE NUNNERY ITSELF WAS FAMOUS FOR ITS STRICT RULES. ONE ALSO HAD TO MAKE THE GRADES, OR FACE BEING EXPELLED EASILY BY THE HEAD SISTER MARIETTA.

MARIETTA WAS NOT A BEAUTY, (ASSIOLA WAS) BUT SHE WAS A VERY CHEERFUL AND FRIENDLY NUN. SHE LIKED TO GO OUT OF THE CONVENT, BUT SHE WAS NOT ALLOWED TO DO IT ALONE. WHEN I HAD A " HOLE " IN MY SCEDULE SHE WOULD ASK ME TO GO WITH HER SHOPPING, OR PAYING BILLS. SOMETIMES WE WENT ON THE HORSECARRIAGE THAT BELONGED TO THE NUNNERY. I LOVED TO GO WITH HER.

THIS ONE TIME SHE TOLD ME TO TAKE HER TO A HAT STORE. I TOOK HER TO " ETA ".MARIETTA LOOKED AROUND AND WITH A SMILE AND A SWEEP OF ONE OF HER HANDS AROUND SHE SAID " AND PEOPLE THINK WE ARE CRAZY" . I HELPED HER TO CHOOSE THE SPRING AND FALL HAT FOR THE SCHOOL. SHE PUT THE SAMPLES REPEATEDLY ON MY HEAD. ONE LOOKED LIKE A SAILOR'S HAT,BUT STYLED MORE FOR GIRLS. THE MATERIAL WAS WHITE COTTON, AND HAD BLUE TRIM. IT LOOKED VERY NICE AND THE GIRLS OF THE SCHOOL WERE THRILLED WITH THE HAT.

I WAS NEVER ABLE TO LEARN WHAT HAPPENED TO SISTER MARIETTA AFTER THE COMMUNISTS EXPELLED THE SISTERS THEMSELVES...I KNOW THAT SISTER ASSIOLA BECAME A BOOKKEEPER (MATH TEACHER) IN A HOTEL IN HEVIZ SPA. SHE ALSO MADE NYLON STOCKINGS OUT OF FACTORY SECONDS. I USED TO SEND HER THOSE NYLONS TO KEEP HER BUSY AT HER REQUEST, AFTER I ASKED HER HOW CAN I HELP.

SISTER ASSIOLA AND I KEPT ON WRITING TO EACH OTHER FOR YEARS, BUT BY THE TIME I WAS ABLE TO VISIT HER SHE DIED. I REALLY LOVED HER, AND SHE WROTE LOVING LETTERS TO ME. SHE WAS ALSO OUR HOME ROOM TEACHER, AND A VERY SPIRITED ONE. SHE WAS TEACHING US THAT WHATEVER WE DO, IT SHOULD BE TO THE GREATER GLORY OF GOD. I WAS VERY TOUCHED , AND IMPRESSED BY HER MORAL LECTURES SHE GAVE AS A HOMEROOM TEACHER EVERY WEEK.

I WALKED TO THE NUNNERY WITH KLARIKA MY KINDERGARTEN FRIEND. SHE WAS THE SEVENTH CHILD IN THE FAMILY.I AM SURE EVERYBODY LOVED HER AS I DID, BUT THE WAY HER FAMILY EXPRESSED THEIR LOVE, WAS WEIRD TO ME.

ON THE SIXTH OF DECEMBER IS THE DAY OF ST.NICK. ALL THE KIDS GET SOME KIND OF GIFT ON THAT DAY, THAT THE KIDS LOVE TO GET, CHOCOLATE ST. NICK, AND SIMILAR CANDIES. KLARIKA WAS CRYING WHEN I GOT TO HER HOME TO PICK HER UP, TO WALK TO SCHOOL.

SHE COULD NOT TALK FIRST, BUT WHEN SHE CALMED DOWN SHE TOLD ME THAT A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY PUT BAKED PUMKIN INTO HER SHOES THAT SHE POLISHED AND PUT IN THE WINDOW FOR ST. NICK, TO PUT IN CHOCOLATE. SHE DID NOT SEE AND DID NOT NOTICE THE PUMKIN, SHE PUT THE SHOE ON AND IT SQUASHED. SHE WAS DESPARATE, FOR SIX BROTHERS AND SISTERS WERE STANDING AROUND AND LAUGHING..

I WOULD SAY THAT "UNCLE " GEZA WAS THE NICEST PERSON IN THE SAPY FAMILY. (THE FATHER) ICU WAS ALSO VERY NICE, NOT MUCH OLDER THAN KLARIKA. MAYBE TEN YEARS. ICU ACCOMPANIED ME HOME ONE DAY, IN THE BEGINNING OF OUR KINDERGARTEN YEARS WITH KLARIKA.

I WENT TO SHOP THAT DAY WITH MY BROTHER PETER, TO BUY THINGS IN THE GROCERY STORE, INCLUDING EGGS. ON THE WAY HOME WE HAD TO PASS KLARIKA'S HOUSE. JUST INFRONT OF THE HOUSE I INSISTED THAT I CARRY THE BAG. PETER WOULD NOT TRUST ME WITH THE EGGS, AND I STARTED TO CRY. ICU HEARD ME FROM THE HOUSE, AND CAME OUT TO INVESTIGATE. WHILE PETER WAS EXPLAINING THE SITUATION, KLARIKA WALKED OUT FROM THE HOUSE, AND WE DISCOVERED THAT WE WENT TOGETHER TO KINDERGARTEN.

BOTH ICU AND KLARIKA WALKED US HOME. ICU MADE FRIENDS WITH MY MOM. THINGS STARTER TO DEVELOP FROM THAT FRIENDSHIP.

NEXT DAY ICU AND " AUNT" ROZSI, KLARI'S MOTHER CAME TO VISIT US. MY MOM LOANED THEM BOOKS TO READ, AND THAT CHANGED A LOT OF THE SAPY FAMILY. THEY WERE WELL TO DO FARMERS, WHO DID NOT HAVE TO WORK ON THE FIELDS, OTHER PEOPLE WORKING THEIR LANDS. BUT THEY WERE NOT LIVING UP TO THEIR FINANCIAL POTENTIALS. ONLY TWO BOYS WENT HIGHER THAN EIGHT YEARS OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. MY MOTHER TALKED THEM INTO EDUCATING AT LEAST THE YOUNGEST BOY. THE TWO YEARS OLDER SON GEZA WENT TO STUDY ELECTRICITY RELATED SERVICES. WE LEARNED THAT THE YOUNGEST SON JANOS WENT TO THE SAME SCHOOL AS MY BROTHER VILI. HE WAS TWO YEARS OLDER, AND WAS NOT A GOOD STUDENT. THE FAMILY WORRIED THAT JANOS WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO GRADUATE. OUR VILI TOOK HIM UNDER HIS WINGS, AND JANOS IMPROVED SO THAT HE WAS ACCEPTED TO LAW SCHOOL UPON GRADUATION.

IRONICALLY VILI JUST TWO YEARS LATER WAS NOT ACCEPTED AT THE UNIVERSITY INSPITE OF HIS OUTSTANDING GRADES, BECAUSE HE WAS JEWISH. WHILE STILL IN GYMNAZIUM, VILI WAS TEACHING A NUMBER OF STUDENTS BESIDES JANOS. ONE OF THEM WAS A TEACHER'S SON OF VILI S SCHOOL, THE GERGELY BOY. VILI WAS T.EACHING HIM LATIN. HIS FATHER WAS VILI'S LATIN TEACHER IN THAT SCHOOL. HE ALSO WAS TEACHING PALI LENGYEL, VERA'S BROTHER. AND THE ZSAK BOY AND THE SARKOZI BOY AND GEZA KIRALY'S SON AND THE BATHO BOY AND I DONT KNOW WHO ELSE.? OH YES THE TIBI MIHALOWITS..... AND SO ON. HE GOT PAID FOR THIS AND HE SAVED IT FOR

A CAMERA. I SHARED HIS JOY, THAT IS HE SHARED IT WITH ME. EXPLAINING HOW IT WORKS. IT FASCINATED ME. IT WAS A FLAT BOX AND BY PUSHING A BUTTON IT OPENED LIKE A HARMONICA. HE USED ME AS A MODEL TO LEARN HOW IT WORKS. WHEN THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH LIGHT WE USED A MAGNESIUM FLASH, THAT WAS ATTACHED TO THE CAMERA, AND LIT UP THE MOMENT THE PICTURE WAS SHOT. THE PICTURES ONE CAN SEE OF JOHN BALINT AND I AND PETER , WERE HIS FIRST PICTURES HE TOOK. VILI WON THE FIRST PRICE ON HIS FIRST COMPETITION HE TOOK PART OF. IT WENT WITH THE TITLE: "PRESIDENT OF THE PHOToclub".

VILI WAS ALSO THE PRESIDENT OF THE "AEROKOR" FOR DESIGNING A PLANE. (OUTLINE, CONTOUR.) AFTER AN OFFICER SAW THIS WORK AT THE SCHOOL PRESENTATION, VILI WAS INVITED TO ENLIST IN THE AIRFORCES¹ DESIGNING SCHOOL AFTER GRADUATION. IT TURNED OUT THAT VILI WAS JEWISH AND WAS NOT ACCEPTED. HE WAS SO DISAPPOINTED. HE THOUGHT THEY KNEW THAT WHEN THE INVITATION WAS EXTENDED.

WHEN THERE WAS A PLAY IN THE GYMNASIUM HE MADE THE POSTERS TO INVITE THE TOWN. THE MERCHANTS OF THE CITY SAW THOSE WORKS OF ART AND BECAME INTERESTED IN ADVERTISING. HE DESIGNED BEAUTIFUL POSTERS FOR DIFFERENT COMPANIES, AND THEY PAID HIM FOR THEM.

THIS STARTED WHEN HE WAS TWELVE YEARS OLD. I HAVE NEVER MET A TALENTED YOUNG BOY TO COMPARE WITH HIM.

PETER (PETIKENK) WAS INTERESTED IN NATURE AND ANIMALS. HE ALWAYS HAD TO HAVE SOME LOVELY LIVING THINGS AROUND HIM, AND HE TOOK GREAT CARE OF THEM..... AND I WAS JUST ABSORBED IN WATCHING WHAT MY FAMILY DID AND AWED BY THOSE THINGS. I TRIED TO LEARN AND IMITATE THEM.

GOING TO THE THEATRE WAS VERY MUCH IN FASHION, AT THIS TIME, AND MY PARENTS LOVED TO GO. OUR USUAL BABY SITTER WAS NOT AVAILABLE AND VILI TOOK IT UPON HIMSELF TO BE OUR SITTER. HE WAS ALREADY 13 YEARS OLD. HE CONSPIRED WITH PETER TO " FOOL " OUR PARENTS. THEY STUFFED OUR WINTERCOATS AND SAT THEM ON A BED. VILI DREW PICTURES OF OUR FACES, AND PUT THEM ON THE STUFFED HEAD WITH A CAP.

MY PARENTS WERE PLAYING ALONG. WHEN THEY ARRIVED HOME WE WERE HIDING. THEY STARTED TO SPEAK TO THE STUFFED FIGURES. THEY SAID, WE SHOULD HAVE BEEN SLEEPING, AND NOT SITTING ON THE BED. AND WE CAME OUT OF THE HIDING PLACES AND STARTED LAUGHING.

AND I COULD SEE THE PRIDE IN THEIR EYES, THEY SEEMED TO BE SO PROUD OF US.....

KLARIKA'S SISTER ICU WAS A BEAUTIFUL GIRL WHICH COULD NOT BE SAID OF MAGDAUSKA OR KLARIKA. ICU HAD A BOYFRIEND. ACCORDING TO THE ETIQUET OF THE THIRTIES, SHE COULD NOT GO WITH HIM ALONE, EVEN IN DAYLIGHT FOR A WALK.

WHEN THEY WANTED TO GO SOMEWHERE THEY BORROWED ME AND KLARIKA TO GO ALONG. WE WERE HAPPY TO GO. THEY LED US TO A LOVELY OPEN SPACE, BESIDE THE RIVER ZAGYVA. EVERYTHING SEEMED SO ALIVE THERE. AMIDST THE LUSH GRASS NEWTS WERE RUNNING SCARED. TINY PALE FLOWERS GREW ALL OVER THE PLACE AND WHEN SIMILAR COLOR MINI-BUTTERFLIES RESTED ON THEM ONE COULD NOT TELL THEM APART. FLOWER FROM BUTTERFLY.

OVER THE SURFACE OF THE RIVER, FIRE AND DRAGONFLIES ZIG-ZAGGED SOMETIMES FALLING IN THE WATER, TO THE DELIGHT OF THE CARPS OF WHICH WERE PLENTY. THE PLANTS, THOSE GROWING IN THE WATER, WERE BENDING IN THE DIRECTION OF THE FLOW. WHEN WALKING ALONG THE BANKS WE FRIGHTENED THE FROGS, AND THEY JUMPED TO THE SAFETY OF THE WATER.

THEY SWAM IN THE LOVELY PRECISE MANNER OF THE FROGS. ABOUT THE SAME TIME I WAS LEARNING HOW TO SWIM AND TRIED TO IMITATE THEM WITH NO SUCCESS. MY FATHER WHO WAS TEACHING ME TO SWIM WOULD NOT LET ME PUT MY FACE IN THE WATER, SINCE WE COULD NOT TELL IF SOMEONE WAS WASHING A HORSE OR OTHER ANIMAL UPRIVER AND CONTAMINATED THE WATER.

WHEN LOOKING AT THE RIVER FROM A DISTANCE, THE REFLECTION OF THE SKY COULD BE SEEN. WHITE PUFFS WERE FLOATING BOTH IN THE SKY AND THE RIVER REFLECTION. I LOVED ICU AND THOSE WALKS OF WONDERS. MY MEMORY OF HER IS A SLANDER , GRACEFUL GIRL, WITH A "FLORENTINE" HAT. THE RIBBONS OF THE HAT FLOWING IN THE BREEZE THAT CAME AT US.

KLARIKA WAS A SILENT CHILD. THE BROTHERS TEASED HER, THAT SHE WAS A LEFTOVER. SHE WAS VERY HURT FROM THIS REMARKS. BUT CRUELTY WAS NOTHING NEW TO THIS FAMILY. IN MY TEN YEARS OF FRIENDSHIP WITH KLARIKA, BEFORE WE MOVED TO CSONGRAD, I COULD NOT HELP BUT WITNESS A FEW.

THE FIRST DISRUPTION IN THE FAMILY TOOK PLACE WHEN ROZSIKA, THE NEXT TO OLDEST DAUGHTER FELL IN LOVE WITH A TEACHER WHO WAS NOT CATHOLIC. THE SAPY FAMILY WERE THINKING OF THEMSELVES AS GOOD CRISTIANS. AND THE OLDEST GIRL MAGDUSKA WAS A FANATIC. THE FUTURE HUSBAND OF ROZSIKA WAS "REFORMED".

SOMEHOW MAGDUSKA WAS THE MOST POWERFUL PERSON IN THE FAMILY. EVERYONE GAVE IN TO HER. I THINK THIS POWER CAME FROM THE FACT THAT SHE WAS CRIPPLED SINCE CHILDHOOD. MAGDUSKA COULD NOT WALK. SHE HAD POLIO WHEN SHE WAS VERY YOUNG. SHE MENAGED TO KEEP THE SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN TERROR, ALONG WITH THE PARENTS.

ROZSIKA WOULD NOT GIVE IN, AND MARRIED HER LOVE, AND MOVED TO AN OTHER CITY. FROM THE DAY OF HER MARRIAGE SHE WAS NOT ALLOWED TO RETURN. THIS WAS MAGDUSKA'S DOING. ROZSIKA SENT LOVELY GIFTS FOR KLARIKA FOR THE HOLIDAYS.

YEARS WENT BY AND ROZSIKA HAD CHILDREN. HER MOTHER COULD NOT TAKE IT ANYMORE. SHE WANTED TO LOVE AND ENJOY HER GRANDCHILDREN. SHE PICKED HERSELF UP ONE DAY AND WENT TO VISIT THEM, IN SPITE OF MAGDUSKA'S WISHES. SHE WENT TO THE RAILROAD STATION. THE TRAIN WAS LATE. SHE WENT VERY CLOSE TO THE TRACKS TO LOOK. WHILE SHE LOOKED ONE WAY, THE TRAIN HIT HER, COMING FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION.. SHE WAS HARD OF HEARING. SHE DIED RIGHT THEN , AND THERE.

AT THIS TIME MAGDUSKA REALLY TOOK OVER THE REIGN OF THE FAMILY. SOMEHOW THE WHOLE FAMILY DEPENDED ON HER. THE FAMILY FORTUNE WAS IN HER HANDS AND ANYONE GOING AGAINST HER WISHES WAS TREATENED TO BE EXCLUDED FROM THE INHERITANCE.

WHEN KLARIKA WAS NINETEEN YEARS OLD SHE WANTED TO MARRY SOMEONE SHE LOVED, PISTA LAKO. HE LOVED HER TOO. MAGDUSKA WOULD NOT HEAR OF IT. YEARS LATER WHEN SHE MARRIED THE PERSON MAGDUSKA LIKED, SHE GOT HER SHARE OF THE INHERITANCE, A BIG BEAUTIFUL HOME. SHE RENTED HALF OF IT. SHE ALSO GOT A HUSBAND, WHO GOT DRUNK EVERY

WEEKEND AND BEAT HER UP AND THE TWO CHILDREN. ONE BOY HAD A NERVOUS BREAK DOWN AT THE AGE OF FIVE, FROM FEAR OF HIS FATHER.

WHEN I VISITED KLARIKA IN HUNGARY, SHE HAD A BAD WOUND ON HER LEG. I ASKED HER ABOUT IT, AND THAT WAS WHEN SHE TOLD ME ABOUT THE ABUSE. I ASKED HER TO DIVORCE HER HUSBAND BEFORE HE KILLS THEM. WHO WILL CLOTHE MY CHILDREN IF I DO, SHE ASKED ME. I PROMISED TO DO THAT, AND SENT THEM PACKAGES AS THEY GREW.

WHILE KLARIKA WAS THINKING ABOUT GETTING THE DIVORCE HER HUSBAND HIT HER ON THE HEAD WITH A KITCHEN CHAIR. IT WAS UNDERSTANDABLE SINCE IT WAS THE NEW YEAR CELEBRATION. A LITTLE MORE TO DRINK.

KLARIKA WAS UNCONSCIOUS FOR WEEKS BEFORE SHE DIED.

NO ONE WROTE THIS TO ME. IT WORRIED ME NOT GETTING ANY LETTERS FROM HER. TWO YEARS PASSED BY AND I WENT TO VISIT HER.

I ARRIVED TO THE HOME WHERE HER BROTHER PISTA AND FAMILY LIVED WITH MAGDUSKA. IT WAS CLOSER TO THE BUS STATION. I ASKED LENKE HER SISTERINLAW, TO SEND ONE OF HER CHILDREN FOR KLARIKA. I NOTICED THAT NOTHING HAPPENED, EXCEPT I SAW THE MOUTH OF LENKE AND PISTA CLOSED UP VERY TIGHT, AND THEY TURNED THEIR HEADS AWAY FROM ME. I WALKED INTO THE ROOM WHERE MAGDUSKA WAS IN BED. AFTER GREETING HER TOO, I ASKED HER IF THERE WAS A BAD RELATIONSHIP WITH KLARIKA. SHE BURST OUT CRYING, AND I KNEW THAT MY GIRLFRIEND WAS DEAD.

PISTA TOOK ME TO THE CEMETERY ON HIS MOTOR BIKE. I PICKED UP FLOWERS ON THE WAY FOR HER.

I KNEW THAT ICU DIED FROM A BLOODCLOT, OR THAT IS HOW I KNEW IT. BUT LENKE , PISTA'S WIFE SPILLED ME THE STORY.

ICU COMITTED SUICIDE BECAUSE SHE COULD NOT TAKE ANY MORE MAGDUSKA'S INTERFERENCE IN HER MARRIAGE. THIS SAME LENKE ALSO TOLD ME WHAT HAPPENED TO HER, RELATING TO MAGDUSKA.

PISTA AND LENKE WERE IN LOVE. THEY HAD A RELATIONSHIP BEFORE THE MARRIAGE. SINCE LENKE BECAME PREGNANT, THEY DECIDED TO GET MARRIED SOONER THAN ORIGINALLY PLANNED. THIS HAPPENED IN COMMUNIST TIMES WHEN THE CHURCH WEDDING WAS FROWNED UPON. STILL THEY WANTED THE BLESSING OF THE CHURCH.

LENKE RENTED A WHEELCHAIR. WASHED AND DRESSED MAGDUSKA WITH EXTRA CARE. LENKE , THE BRIDE, PUSHED MAGDUSKA TO THE CHURCH. WHEN THE PRIEST ASKED "ANYONE KNOWS ANYTHING WHY THEY SHOULD NOT GET MARRIED'.... MAGDUSKA OPENED HER OTHERWISE TIGHT MOUTH AND SAID GOOD AND LOUD " DONT BLESS THEM, SHE IS A WHORE AND THERE IS A BABY IN HER STOMACH". SEEED MAGDUSKA.....

THE PRIEST TURNED ON HIS HEELS AND WALKED AWAY.

LENKE PUSHED MAGDUSKA HOME AND PUT HER IN BED, AND TOOK CARE OF HER FOR FORTY FIVE YEARS UNTIL MAGDUSKA DIED.

MANY YEARS BEFORE THIS, ONE OF MY GIRLFRIENDS WENT FOR A VISIT IN JERUSALEM. I ASKED HER TO BRING A FEW OLIVEWOOD ROSARIES FOR MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS IN HUNGARY.....I TOOK ONE FOR MAGDUSKA, MUCH BEFORE I LEARNED ABOUT HER ACTIVITIES.

ANOTHER TIME WHEN I VISITED HER I ASKED HER WHET WAS SHE DOING IN THE LONG WINTER EVENINGS.. SHE REACHED UNDER HER PILLOW, PULLED OUT THE ROSARY AND SAID IN A HALTING VOICE " I PRAY". I LOOKED HER IN THE FACE AND NOTICED HER EYES WERE FULL OF TEARS, THEN SHE ADDED "THERE IS PLENTY I HAVE TO PRAY FOR". AFTER THE ENLIGHTENING STORIES OF LENKE I KNEW EXACTLY WHAT SHE MEANT. HOW MANY FAMILY MEMBERS' DEATH WAS SHE RESPONSIBLE FOR?.

I DONT WANT TO WRITE ABOUT THE BROTHERS, EXCEPT TO MENTION ONE INCIDENT. WHEN I WAS THERE THE LAST TIME, THE OLDEST BROTHER GEZA CAME TO VISIT MAGDUSKA. HE DID NOT SEE ME FOR FIFTY YEARS. HE WAS EIGHTY YEARS OLD. OF COURSE HE COULD NOT RECOGNIZE ME. MAGDUSKA SAID "GEZA, THIS IS KLARIKA'S GIRLFRIEND MAGDA ". "OH" HE SAID " THE JEW MAGDA "?.....

WHEN I WENT BACK TO JASZBERENY AFTER TWENTY YEARS OF ABSENCE, THE FIRST THING THAT SHOCKED ME WAS THE SIGHT OF OUR OLD TEMPLE IN RUINS. ONLY ONE WALL STILL STOOD POINTING AT THE SKY AND IN IT THE COLORFUL GLASS WINDOW WITH THE STAR OF DAVID WAS INTACT. IT USED TO BE THE ONLY THING THAT DECORATED THE TEMPLE.

IT LOOKED BACK AT ME THE SAME AS ALWAYS WHEN I WAS A CHILD. I REMEMBER MANY HAPPY DAYS LOOKING AT IT. FOR THE DAYS THAT WE SPENT IN THE TEMPLE WERE THE HAPPY ONES, THE HOLIDAYS, WHEN THE OUTSIDE WORLD WITH ALL THE NAZIS WERE CLOSED OUT, THE TROUBLES, WHICH WERE MANY, FORGOTTEN; WHERE WE CAME TOGETHER TO PRAISE THE LORD FOR WHAT HE HAS GIVEN US BESIDE TROUBLES.

WE LISTENED TO THE SINGING OF THE CANTOR AND TO THE RABBI WHO HAD A WAY OF TALKING THAT ONE WENT HOME REMEMBERING WHAT HE SAID.

THE WALLS THAT HEARD IT WERE NOW ALL CRUMBLED AROUND THE ONE STILL STANDING WITH ITS WINDOW EYE OF THE STAR OF DAVID.

I DID NOT WORRY ABOUT THE WALLS BUT ABOUT MY FRIENDS WHO, WITH ME, USED TO FILL THE TEMPLE, AND WHO ARE NO MORE: WHO USED TO LISTEN TO THE RABBI WHO IS NO MORE.

I COLLECT HAGGADAHS. THEY TELL THE PASSOVER STORY OF SLAVES BEING FREED FROM SLAVERY. THOUSANDS OF YEARS LATER, THE HAGGADAH TELLS

MY STORY BECAUSE I RELATE TO IT. I LOVE THE STORY AS A FREED SLAVE WOULD. I ALSO CONNECT IT TO DIFFERENT TIMES AND MOODS.

I REMEMBER THE YEAR I WENT TO FORTH GRADE. OUR CLASS DEMONSTRATED THE SEDER SERVICE TO THE YOUNGER SET, BY EACH OF US READING A CHAPTER FROM THE HAGGADAH. EACH CHAPTER HAD BEEN MARKED WITH THE NAME OF THE READER.

THERE WERE 35 STUDENTS IN THE WHOLE SCHOOL BUT IT WAS A SPECIAL SCHOOL. WE LOVED IT DEARLY. I WOULD GO AS FAR AS NOT TELLING MY PARENTS WHEN I HAD A SORE TROAT, JUST SO I WOULD NOT MISS ANYTHING THE TEACHER HAD TO SAY. HE MADE US WANT TO KNOW, AND HE MADE US LOVE THE HAGGADAH, LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE.

SO WHEN I GREW UP I STARTED TO COLLECT HAGGADAHS.

I HAVE A VERY OLD ONE WITH WOODCUTS IN IT. ONE CAN FEEL THE FINE PRINTING WITH THE FINGERTIPS. THE PICTURES WERE COPIED IN LATER HAGGADAS FROM THIS EDITION. I HAVE ONE FROM JERUSALEM, WITH AN OLIVE WOOD-COVER. THERE IS ONE SIGNED BY THE ILLUSTRATOR AND THE EDITOR, ONE OF A THOUSAND COPIES THAT WERE ISSUED. I KEPT ON COLLECTING THEM, TRYING TO GET A VARIETY AND TREASURING THEM FOR THE SAME REASON.

AFTER LOOKING AT WHAT REMAINED OF THE TEMPLE, I WENT TO VISIT ARANKA DEUTSCH. I ASKED HER A LOT OF QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TEMPLE. SHE TOLD ME HOW THE WORKERS TREW OUT THE BOOKS BEFORE

DEMOLISHING THE TEMPLE, AND HOW SHE TRIED TO SAVE THEM BY PICKING UP AS MANY AS SHE COULD. ARANKA ASKED ME IF I WANTED TO HAVE SOME. I WANTED TO HAVE ALL OF THEM, SINCE NOBODY COULD USE THEM THERE BUT MY BAGS WERE ALREADY OVERWEIGHT FOR MY FLIGHT BACK TO THE STATES.

I TOOK WHATEVER I COULD FIT IN MY POCKETBOOK.

AS I PUT MY HAND IN BETWEEN THE PILE I FELT ONE THIN BOOK WITHOUT A COVER. PULLING IT OUT I STARTED TO TURN THE PAGES. IT WAS AN OLD, YELLOWED MUCH USED HAGGADAH. AS I KEPT TURNING THE PAGES I SAW THE CHAPTERS MARKED WITH NAMES. THE NAMES WERE THOSE OF MY CLASSMATES AND MYSELF. IT WAS THE VERY HAGGADAH THAT MY CLASS USED TO DEMONSTRATE THE SEDER TO THE YOUNGER SET SO MANY YEARS BEFORE.

CSONGRAD WAS A VERY " NEAT " CITY. THE STREETS RAN PARALLEL WITH THE RIVER TISZA. IT WAS A LONG BLOCK FROM THE RIVER TO THE MAIN STREET. WHILE LOTS OF STREETS IN JASZBERENY LACKED PAVEMENTS, IN CSONGRAD MOST OF THEM HAD IT. ALSO THERE WAS RUNNING WATER IN EVERY HOUSE, DRINKING WATER.

IN JASZBERENY THE HOUSES HAD WELL WATER, WHICH WAS HARD WATER. IT WAS GOOD FOR THE VEGETABLES AND FLOWERS, THOSE GROWN IN EVERY BACKYARD. DRINKING WATER HAD TO BE GOTTEN FROM THE ARTESIAN WELLS WHICH WERE LOCATED ON THE STREETS, AND PUMPED BY HAND.

THESE STREET-WELLS SERVED AS A MEETING PLACE, WHEN THERE WATER SHORTAGE. AS PEOPLE WERE STANDING IN LINE FOR THE SLOWLY DRIPPING WATER TO FILL THEIR WATER CAN, THEY SOCIALIZED.

IN CSONGRAD THE PARK WAS FULL OF YELLOW ROBINS, AND ON SATURDAY EVENINGS THERE WAS A BAND IN SUMMERTIME, AND PEOPLE WENT THERE TO MEET FRIENDS, LIKE WE DID AT THE MARGIT ISLAND IN JASZBERENY. WHEN IT WAS VERY HOT THE RIVERBANK PROVIDED THE COOL BREEZE IN THE EVENINGS. WE ALSO WATCHED THE ARRIVING RIVERBOAT WITH INTEREST.

THERE WAS A FLOOD AREA, WHERE DELICIOUS BERRIES GREW WILD. THEY WERE FULL FLAVORED, VERY ENJOYABLE. WE PICKED THEM AS WE WALKED. THE TISZA WAS NOT A SAFE RIVER TO SWIM IN. EVERY SUMMER IT CLAIMED A FEW LIVES OF THE BEST SWIMMERS, WHO WERE SURE THEY COULD CONQUER

THE SWIRLS WHICH WERE DEADLY. THE TRICK WAS TO SWIM WITH IT DOWN AND OUT. THERE WERE PLACES WHERE SWIMMING POOLS WERE BUILT IN THE RIVER. THEY WERE CAGE-LIKE THE WATER PASSED THROUGH. THAT IS WHERE I WENT TO SWIM WITH FRIENDS.

AS I LOVED SO MUCH TO GO TO THE TEMPLE IN JASZBERENY THAT WAS THE FIRST PLACE I WENT WITH MY FAMILY THE NEXT FRIDAY WE ARRIVED IN CSONGRAD. TO MY GREAT HAPPINESS THE PEOPLE CAME AROUND US TO GIVE US A WELCOME. THEY INVITED US AND WE MADE FRIENDS IN NO TIME. MY FAMILY BECAME VERY POPULAR, SINCE MY FATHER WAS THE ONLY JEWISH TAILOR IN THE CITY. THEY FLOCKED TO OUR HOME, WHERE MY FATHER SET UP WORKSHOP.

THE FIRST PERSON TO COME WAS THE RABBI, DR. REISS. WE HAD A SMALL SILKY DOG WHO NEVER SAW A BEARDED MAN BEFORE THE RABBI. IT WAS A DISASTER, WHAT A RUCKUS SHE MADE AT THE FIRST MEETING, BUT LATER SHE KEPT QUIET.

I WAS INSTANTLY HAPPY ABOUT ALL OUR FAMILY LIVING THERE ON MY FATHER'S SIDE. THOSE LOVING PEOPLE AND OUR NEW FRIENDS MADE ME EVEN HAPPIER. MY BROTHER PETI BECAME VERY GOOD FRIENDS WITH OCSI SCHWARZ. I TOO LIKED HIM VERY MUCH. OCSI'S FATHER HAD A FABRIC SHOP. ONE DAY HE CAME TO TALK TO MY FATHER, WITH SOME FABRIC IN A BAG. HE SAID, HE CAME ALONE, BECAUSE HIS SON WAS GROWING AT A

FANTASTIC RATE, AND HE WANTED MY FATHER TO MAKE HIM A SUIT THAT OCSI WOULD NOT GROW OUT IN A YEAR.

MY FATHER WAS A SCULPTOR, AND HE WAS DESPARATE THAT HE HAD TO MAKE SOMETHING THAT DID NOT FIT. OCSI CAME OVER FOR MEASUREMENT. WHEN THE SUIT WAS READY BOTH MY FATHER AND HIM WERE DEPRESSED. BUT MY FATHER DID NOT WANT OCSI TO BE ANGRY WITH HIS DAD AND NEVER TOLD HIM WHAT HE WAS ASKED TO DO. WHEN I MET HIM FORTY YEARS LATER IT CAME UP AND I JUST HAD TO TELL IT TO HIM.

I HAVE BEEN LOOKING FOR HIM FOR YEARS. I WAS LOOKING FOR OCSI (JUNIOR) SCHWARZ BUT HE CHANGED HIS NAME, AND WAS NOW CALLED GEORGE SZALAI. HE GOT TIRED FOR BEING HATED FOR HAVING A "JEWISH" NAME. OCSI'S FATHER LOST HIS LEGS IN WWI. AND PROBABLY THOUGHT THAT IT WAS ENOUGH PROOF TO PASS FOR A JEW. HE TOO FINISHED IN THE GAS CHAMBERS.

OCSI WAS ACCUSED OF BEING A MESSENGER BETWEEN TWO UNDERGROUND GROUPS. HE WAS PUT IN JAIL AND SINCE HE DENIED IT, HE WAS TORTURED. HE HAD NO FINGERNAILS EVEN AFTER FORTY YEARS. AT THE TIME THIS HAPPENED HE WAS FIFTEEN YEARS OLD. OCSI HAD A YOUNGER BROTHER WHO WAS MURDERED LIKE OUR PETER. BUT AS I SAID CSONGRAD WAS NICE TO THE JEWS. ON OUR LAST DAY WE WERE GIVEN BREAD FOR THE TRIP TO HELL.

WHEN I WENT BACK TO CSONGRAD AFTER LIBERATION FROM CAMP, I WENT TO THE GHETTO IN HOPE OF FINDING SOMETHING OF OUR BELONGINGS, AND I DID. MY FATHER GAVE ME A SILVER COIN SOME YEARS BEFORE AND I HID IT BESIDE A WALL. I WAS HAPPY TO HAVE SOMETHING THAT HE GAVE ME. ALSO I FOUND A WOOL LACE DRESS MY MOM KNITTED FOR ME THE WINTER BEFORE WE WERE TAKEN.

THE WHOLE GHETTO WAS A MESS. PEOPLE CUT UP THE BEDDINGS, WHICH WERE MADE OF GOOSE DOWN IN HOPES OF FINDING TREASURES WE WERE SUPPOSED TO HIDE. WHEN I MOOVED AROUND THE ROOM, THE GOOSE DOWN STARTED TO MOVE AROUND FROM THE WIND OF MY STEPS. IT WAS GOHOSTLY, AND I DID NOT FEEL LIKE LOOKING FOR ANYTHING ANYMORE. I LEFT THE CITY

BEFORE I LEFT I GAVE THE KNIT DRESS TO VILMA, MY UNCLE'S WIFE, ASKING HER TO SAVE IT FOR ME, SINCE THAT WAS THE ONLY THING FROM MY MOTHER, THAT WAS THE ONLY THING FROM MY MOM I HAD.

AT A LATER DATE I ASKED HER FOR IT, AND SHE SAID: "YOU ARE JUST LIKE THE LADY LUKACSOVITS WHO CLAIMS SHE GAVE ME SILVERS FOR HER TO KEEP. SHE DID NOT GIVE ME SILVERS, JUST LIKE YOU DID NOT GIVE ME A DRESS ". AND I JUST KEPT QUIET, BECAUSE I WAS GRATEFUL SHE SAVED MY UNCLE'S LIFE BY MARRYING HIM.

AT THAT TIME THAT IS HOW I KNEW IT.

WHEN I LEFT HUNGARY FOR THE FIRST TIME, IT WAS IN LOCKED CATTLE CAR. ONE TWO BY ONE FOOT WINDOW NEAR THE CEILING GAVE US THE AIR THAT WAS USED BY ONE HUNDRED HUMAN BEINGS. WE WERE JAMMED IN THERE FOR THREE DAYS. BUT THERE WERE BIGGER PROBLEMS IN THE WAGON WE WERE IN. THERE WERE PEOPLE WHO WERE TAKING MEDICATION FOR YEARS, AND THE SUPPLY RAN OUT. A FRIEND WITH DIABETES WAS IN A TERRIBLE CONDITION. IT HURT JUST LOOKING AT THE SUFFERING. RIGHT THERE BESIDE US A WOMAN I KNEW, HAD MALARIA AND GOT AN ATTACK ON THE SECOND DAY. SHE WAS BURNING UP AND WE COULD NOT HELP HER.

WE SPENT A WEEK IN A BRICK FACTORY BEFORE THIS TRIP TOOK PLACE, IN THE CITY OF KECSKEMET. WE WERE NOT GIVEN FOOD OR WATER THERE. THERE WERE SOME HARDWATER WELLS BUT THE WATER WAS NOT DRINKABLE, AND THERE WAS NO WAY OF GETTING IT UP FROM THE WELL ANYWAY.

ONE DAY I WAS SELECTED FOR WORK BY A SOLDIER. HE ORDERED ALL THE PEOPLE TO DISPLAY WHAT WAS IN THE RUCKSACKS.

WHAT HE AND OTHER SOLDIERS LIKED AND TOOK, I HAD TO CARRY TO THE WAREHOUSE IN A BLANKET. AT TIMES IT WAS A VERY DRAMATIC EXPERIENCE FOR ME WHEN A PERSON BELIEVED THAT SHE OR HE COULD NOT LIVE WITHOUT THE PULLOVER HER MOTHER KNITTED FOR HER...IT HAPPENED

WITH SOMEONE I WAS VERY CONCERNED ABOUT, AND I LET GO OF ONE OF THE CORNERS OF THE BLANKET, AND THE ITEM "ACCIDENTLY" FELL OUT SO SHE COULD HAVE IT BACK.

MY PARENTS WERE WATCHING THIS FROM THE ROW FACING US AND WERE SHAKING FROM FRIGHT. I WAS YOUNG AND DID NOT KNOW, NOR APPRECIATE YET THE MEANING OF THE WORD "SABOTAGE".

AFTER I REPEATEDLY TOOK THE BLANKETS FULL OF CLOTHES, BELTS, UNDERWEAR TO THE HOARDING HOUSE I RETURNED TO MY PARENTS. THEY TOLD ME, I COULD HAVE BEEN EXECUTED ON THE SPOT, DID THE SOLDIER DISCOVER MY ACTIVITY. BUT HE DID NOT AND IF HE DID, I WOULD HAVE MISSED THE SIGHT OF OFFICERS OF RANK GOING THROUGH HURRIEDLY THE JEWISH CLOTHES SO ANOTHER OFFICER WOULD NOT NOTICE SOMETHING FIRST AND GRABBING THE LADIES UNDERWEAR, AND CLOTHES FOR THEIR WIVES FIRST.

IT HAD SUCH A COMICAL EFFECT ON ME.....

ANOTHER DAY I WAS SELECTED FOR PEELING THE POTATOES THAT WERE COOKED FOR THE SOLDIERS. WE WERE NOT HUNGRY ANYWAY. THE SHOCK DID NOT WEAR OFF YET. OUR CITY GAVE US EACH AS A PARTING GIFT A ONE KG. SIZE BREAD ON LEAVING. ON ARRIVAL MY MOM DISCOVERED THAT THERE WERE PEOPLE THERE FROM OTHER CITIES LIKE THOSE OF FELEGY-HAZA, WHO ALREADY SPENT TEN DAYS THERE BEFORE WE ARRIVED AND THEY WERE HUNGRY.

THE GENEROSITY OF HER HEART HAD NO BOUNDS. SHE SLICED UP OUR BREADS AND GAVE THEM TO THOSE. LATER THAT GROUP WAS TAKEN TO THE RAILROAD STATION AND WERE SHIPPED TO AUSCHWITZ AS WE LEARNED LATER WHEN MEETING SOME OF THEM THERE. AS THIS GROUP WAS MARCHING PAST US, SOMEONE THREW A SMALL COTTON SACK AT MY MOTHER. SHE GRABBED IT, AND PULLING THE STRING OPEN SHE FOUND POPPY SEED IN THE SACK. WE FOUND SOME PAPER, AND TORE IT TO PIECES, LARGE ENOUGH FOR SMALL BAGS. AFTER WE MADE THE BAGS SHE FILLED THEM WITH POPPY SEED AND WENT AROUND ASKING WHO HAD DIARRHEA, AND GAVE THE BAGS TO THOSE WHO DID.

MY MOM ALWAYS KNEW WHAT WAS THE BEST TO DO, AND WHAT TO SAY IN DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES. YES, SHE ALWAYS KNEW, EXCEPT WHEN WE ARRIVED IN FRONT OF MENGELE AND SHE SAID "WIR SIND MUTTER UND TOCHTER".(SPELLING?) THAT WAS HER TICKET TO THE GAS CHAMBER... MY MOTHER MY MOTHER !!!!!!! MY MOTHER!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

WE WERE PARTED, AND MY LAST MEMORY OF MY MOM IS A TURN OF HER BODY ONCE MORE LOOKING AFTER ME.....I JUST LOOKED BACK AT THE SAME MOMENT SHE TURNED.

I DID NOT KNOW HER DESTINATION, JUST LIKE I DID NOT KNOW MINE, BUT I COULD SEE THAT I WAS IN A GROUP OF YOUNGER PEOPLE. WE WERE LED TO THE "SHOWER", THAT FORTUNATELY WAS SHOWER. WHEN WE

GOT OUT WET, WE WERE TOWN SOME CLOTHES AND WERE MARCHED INTO A "BLOCK" BUILDING. IT WAS RAINING, NIGHT, AND WE WERE EXHAUSTED TO OUR LIMITS FROM THE THREE DAYS TRIP IN THE CATTLE CAR, BUT WE WERE STILL ALIVE. IN THE MORNING WE HAD A CHANCE TO LOOK AROUND WHILE WE WERE MARCHED TO ANOTHER CAMP. IT HAD DIFFERENT BUILDINGS AS WE WERE FIRST. THIS PLACE DID NOT HAVE AN ELECTRIC FENCE, IN FACT NO FENCE ON TWO SIDES. ONE WAS ON THE FRONT WHERE THERE WAS A GATE.

WHEN WE GOT TROUGH THE GATE I SAW A SWIMMING POOL ON THE RIGHT. I THINK THOSE HOUSES WERE BUILT FOR THE GUARDS, NOT FOR US. THEY WERE RANCH HOUSES, SOME U SHAPED, AND THE HOUSE WAS DIVIDED TO MANY ROOMS. THEY WERE NOT READY TO USE. MATERIALS WERE LAYING AROUND. THIS WAS " B III" LAGER

ONCE IN THE HOUSE , WE WERE PLACED, AS MANY OF US AS COULD BE, LAYING DOWN ON ONE SIDE, ONE NEXT TO THE OTHER, LIKE SARDINES. IT WAS AFFECTING ME INCREDIBLY. I LOVED SPACE. BUT IT HAD A PURPOSE. AT NIGHT WE GOT A BLANKET. ONE BLANKET TO COVER FIVE PEOPLE. SO WE HAD TO SCHRINK TO THE SIZE OF THAT BLANKET. IT WAS BEARABLE. AT LEAST UNTIL IT STARTED OR CONTINUED RAINING, WHICH WAS VERY OFTEN. AT THOSE TIMES THE BLANKETS WERE NOT DISTRIBUTED, BECAUSE THE RAIN CAME RIGHT TROUGH THE UNFINISHED ROOF. AND AS IT DID, THE FLOOR HELD THE WATER. WE WORKED FEVERISHLY TO BAIL OUT THE WATER WITH A DISH

WE GOT TO EAT FROM. ONE DISH FOR FIVE PERSONS. IT WAS ALL IN VAIN. THE RAIN DID NOT STOP FOR THREE DAYS AT A TIME AND I FOUND MYSELF SITTING AT NIGHT ON THAT DISH TURNED UPSIDE DOWN, SO I WOULD NOT SOAK MY PANTIES HAD I HAD ONE, BY SITTING ON THE FLOOR IN THREE INCHES OF WATER.

WHEN FINALLY THERE WAS A BREAK IN THE WEATHER OUR ANKLES WERE SWOLLEN DOUBLE SIZE, FROM NOT BEING ABLE TO LAY DOWN.

IN THE BEGINNING WE DID NOT WORRY ABOUT THE SELECTIONS, THAT CAME DAILY AFTER THE RAIN STOPPED. BUT PEOPLE WERE NOT SUPPOSED TO LIVE THERE AND WE WERE LESS AND LESS EVERY DAY.

I HEARD THAT SOMEONE WAS LOOKING FOR ME. IT WAS MY AUNT OLGA. WE WERE LOCATED VERY CLOSE AND WE WERE HAPPY TO FIND EACH OTHER. SHE CAME WITH AN EARLIER TRANSPORT AND SHE TOLD ME THAT THE REST OF OUR FAMILY WENT LEFT. OLGA DID NOT KNOW NOR ANY NEWCOMER AT THE TIME THE REAL MEANING OF "GOING LEFT". WHEN WE ARRIVED THE GUARDS GAVE US THIS STORY, THAT OLD PEOPLE TAKE CARE OF THE YOUNG ONES AND WE WHO ARE WORKING AGE WILL WORK. AND FROM THAT WE DEDUCED THAT IT MEANS WE WILL BE FED, SO WE WILL BE ABLE TO WORK.

MY AUNT OLGA LIVED IN ANOTHER "HOUSE" BUT WE VISITED EVERY DAY JUST LIKE AT HOME, UNTIL I WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL THAT WAS FOR "CONTAGIOUS DISEASE " CASES.

OLGA CAME TO VISIT ME IN THE "HOSPITAL" . SHE STOOD AT THE
SORROUNDING FENCE. SHE HAD TO SHOUT VERY LOUD TO BE HEARD..
SOMEONE TOLD ME TO GO TO THE WINDOW. WHEN I SAW HER I FELT SO
SORRY FOR HER AND ALSO FOR MYSELF. I FELT HER LONELINESS OUT
THERE, ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE, LIKE I FELT MY OWN INSIDE
THE HOSPITAL, WITH ALL THOSE DYING PEOPLE ON THE FLOOR.

THAT WAS THE LAST TIME I SAW HER. SHE DID NOT COME ANY MORE.
SHE WAS THE LAST ONE I SAW OF MY FAMILY IN AUSCHWITZ.I WAS SO SAD
TO SEE HER. I MUST HAVE FELT WHAT WAS TO COME. SHE DID NOT SURVIVE.

FROM MY FATHER'S SIDE NO ONE SURVIVED WHO WENT TO CAMP.
NO ONE EXCEPT I. THIS FAR. BUT THANKS GOD WHO DID NOT GO TO CAMP
DID SURVIVE. UNCLE IMRE LIVED TO BE SEVENTY EIGHT YEARS OLD.

IT WAS ONE OF THOSE MIRACLES. UNCLE IMRE WAS TAKEN TO
FORCED LABOR CAMP. ONE DAY THE OFFICER WHO WAS IN CHARGE, TOLD
THE GROUP-IMRE WAS IN, THAT WHO EVER DOES NOT FEEL HEALTHY OR
STRONG ENOUGH TO DO VERY HARD WORK, SHOULD STEP OUT. MY UNCLE DID
JUST THAT. HE WAS NOT A PERSON CUT OUT FOR THE KIND OF WORK THAT
REQUIRED STRENGHT. HE WAS UNDERWEGHT. MY GRANDMOTHER WAS A VERY
SLENDER WOMAN. SHE HAS GIVEN BIRTH TO SEVEN CHILDREN, OF WHOM
SIX WERE TWICE HER SIZE WHEN GROWN UP, BUT UNCLE IMRE WAS LIKE HER.

HARD LABOR WOULD HAVE KILLED HIM WITHIN A WEEK S TIME. HE TOO WAS AN ESTATE BOOKKEEPER LIKE HIS FATHER. ONCLE WORKED ON THE GRAF LUKACSOWICS ESTATE BEFORE LABOR CAMP.

WHEN HE STEPPED OUT, HIS FRIENDS PULLED HIM BACK IN LINE. HE RELATED THIS STORY TO ME TWENTY YEARS LATER. ONE OF THEN WHISPERED TO HIM: "STAY PUT OR YOU WILL BE EXECUTED. BUT IMRE REPLIED "I PREFER THAT" AND STEPPED OUT AGAIN.

THE OFFICER GAVE HIM A PASS TO GO HOME TO CSONGRAD. THE OFFICER KNEW, THAT FROM THERE HE WILL BE TAKEN TO AUSCHWITZ, WITH THE REST OF US.

ONLY THERE WAS A MISCALCULATION. WE WERE TAKEN FROM THE CITY BEFORE THE SCEDULED DATE.

WHEN UNCLE IMRE ARRIVED TO CSONGRAD HE SHOWED HIS PASS AT THE RAILWAY STATION TO THE POLICE MAN CHECKING ON THE ARRIVING TRAVELLERS. THAT POLICE OFFICER REPORTED HIM BEFORE HE COULD REPORT HIMSELF AT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

NEXT MORNING ANOTHER POLICE OFFICER PICKED HIM UP AT HOME TO TAKE HIM TO THE POLICE STATION. ON THE WAY THEY HAD A CONVERSATION. MY UNCLE WAS VERY DEPRESSED FROM HAVING LEARNED THAT HIS FAMILY WAS REMOVED FROM THE CITY..... BUT THIS OFFICER TOLD HIM THAT HE WILL

GUARANTEE FOR MY UNCLE, WITH HIS LIFE, THAT HE WOULD NOT BE TAKEN AWAY. OF COURSE UNCLE COULD NOT BELIEVE THAT ANYTHING LIKE THAT COULD POSSIBLY HAPPEN.. WHEN THEY GOT TO THE POLICE STATION, THIS INCREDIBLE DISCUSSION TOOK PLACE BETWEEN THE RABID CHIEF OF POLICE, AND THE OFFICER. TO THE GREATEST SURPRISE OF (I AM SURE) ALL THREE OF THEM MY UNCLE WALKED OUT A FREE MAN.

UNCLE TOLD ME THAT WHEN THEY CAME OUT FROM THE POLICE STATION HE COULD NOT TAKE THE TENSION ANY LONGER, AND HE BROKE DOWN, SOBBING FOR A LONG TIME.

- I FORGOT TO MENTION, THAT HIS WIFE AND DAUGHTER WERE AT HOME WHEN HE ARRIVED FROM "FORCED LABOR" THE DAY BEFORE. (THEY WERE CATHOLICS).~ IMRE'S LIFE WAS SAVED.

HE IN TURN SAVED THE LIFE OF FOUR AMERICAN AIRMEN. THEY HAD TO BAIL OUT OVER THE ESTATE, SINCE THE RUSSIANS MISTOOK THEM FOR GERMAN PLANES AND WERE SHOT DOWN. MY UNCLE HID THEM UNTIL THEY WERE ABLE TO CONTACT THEIR UNITS AND WERE RESCUED. THE NEWSPAPER REPORTED THAT THE RUSSIANS SHOT DOWN AN ENEMY GERMAN PLANE.

ELISABET, MY MOTHER'S SISTER WAS ALSO SAVED FROM CAMP. HER HUSBAND WAS A JEHOVA'S WITNESS, BUT BECAUSE OF HIS STATUS IN THE VILLAGE, HE WAS KNOWN TO OTHERS AS A GREEK ORTHODOX. HE WAS A FINANCE OFFICER AND THE MILITARY COMMENDER OF THE VILLAGE.

HE WAS A HIGHLY RESPECTED PERSON. WHEN I WENT DOWN THE STREET WITH HIM, EVERYONE WE MET RAISED A HAT. THIS WAS AN UNUSUAL RESPECT, FOR IT HAPPENED DURING THE HUNGARIAN OCCUPATION OF TRANSYLVANIA AND HE WAS A ROMANIAN MAN. (WE ARE NOW IN TRANSYLVANIA WHERE IT IS HAPPNING IN THE VILLAGE OF MARGHITA)

THERE WAS A LOT OF HATRED BETWEEN THOSE TWO NATIONALITIES. HITLER GAVE THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY BACK TO HUNGARY IN THIRTYNINE. MANY ROMANIANS RAN AWAY, BUT MY UNCLE JOHN ROMOCEA HAD NO FEARS AND STAYED. WHEN IT BECAME THE LAW THAT ALL JEWS HAD TO GO INTO THE GHETTO, MY UNCLE TOLD HIS WIFE, "YOU ARE NOT GOING ANYWHERE".

THE POLICE CAME FOR HER, BECAUSE SHE DID NOT GO. HER HUSBAND TOLD THEM SHE CANNOT GO ALONG . THE POLICE ANSWERED, THAT IN THAT CASE THEY WILL CARRY HER. NOW THE HUSBAND TOLD THESE MEN THAT HE WILL SHOOT ANYONE WHO TOUCHES HIS WIFE. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT, WAS, THE OFFICERS TURNED ON THEIR HEELS AND WENT BACK TO THE POLICE STATION TO REPORT WHAT HAPPENED. MY AUNT NEVER SAW THEM AGAIN ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS.

SHE WAS THE ONLY JEW LEFT IN THE VILLAGE. THEY HAD AN ADOPTED SON NAMED PAUL, WHO AT THAT TIME WAS GETTING HIS DOCTORATE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF BUCHAREST. HE WAS ALSO WORKING FOR THE COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER TRANSLATING THE WORLD NEWS FROM DIFFERENT LANGUAGES.

PAUL'S SUPERIORS DID NOT LIKE THE WAY HE TRANSLATED THE NEWS . IT SHOULD HAVE FITTED THE COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY. HE WAS WARNED. THE SUPERIORS WERE NOT SATISFIED. WHEN PAUL GOT SICK WITH A BAD CASE OF JAUNDICE AND WAS HOSPITALISED, BY THE TIME MY AUNT WENT TO SEE HIM IN A HURRY, "HE WAS GONE"

PAUL S HOSPITAL ROOMMATE TOLD MY AUNT, THAT PAUL WAS POISONED AND HE WAS AWARE OF IT ,AND KNEW HE WAS DYEING.

MY AUNT WAS HEARTBROKEN. SHE COULD NOT CALL HER HUSBAND TO COME TO HELP, SINCE HE TOO WAS SICK WITH CANCER FOR A LONG TIME AND WAS BEDRIDDEN.

ELISABET BURIED PAUL ALONE, TRANSPORTING HIM TO A PLACE, THE VILLAGE WHERE HE WAS BORN, AND WHERE HE TOLD HER WHEN HE WAS A CHILD HE WANTED TO BE BURIED THERE. IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL PLACE IN THE CEMETERY, CLOSE TO THE RIVER, A SPOT HE LOVED.

WHEN SHE WAS FINISHED WITH THIS HEARTBRAKING CHORE, SHE TOOK THE TRAIN HOME, TO FIND OUT THAT HER HUSBAND DIED THE VERY SAME DAY SHE GOT HOME.

SHE WROTE THIS TO ME, WHEN I WAS ALREADY IN THE STATES. I WAS UNABLE TO HELP HER, SINCE THE WEIGHT OF THE LOSS OF MY FAMILY THAT WAS ALSO HER FAMILY, JUST A FEW YEARS AGO DID NOT MAKE ANOTHER ADJUSTMENT EASY..... WHEN I WENT TO SEE HER THE LAST TIME SHE

lett; ebből azt tanuljuk, hogy az Izraeliták ott jelesek voltak. Hatalmas, a mint irva van: És az izraeliták szaporodtak, sokasodtak és hatalmasok lettek fölötté nagyon, s az egész országot ellepték. És szaporodtak, amint irva van: Anyira szaporítottalak, mint a mező növényét, megsaporodtál, megnőttél, kollemekkel disztve, melleid domborítva, hajfürteid hullámozva; pedig meztelen és csupasz voltál.

וַיֹּדֶעַ De az Egyiptomiak rosszul bántak velünk, ki-noztak és rabigával terheltek.

וַיֹּדֶעַ Az Egyiptomiak rosszul bántak velünk, amint irva van: Okoskodjunk, nehogy megsaporodjanak s háború esetén az ellen-séghez csatlakozva föl-lázadjanak ellenünk és el-menjenek az országból.

וְעַתָּה És kinoztak, amint irva van: Felügyelőket rendeltek nozójuk, hogy gyötör-jék nehéz munkákkal, és álalmi tsakat építettek Pharaónak, Phithómot és

מִצְרַיִם שָׁם: עֲצוּם. כָּמָה, שְׁנֵאֲמַר וְכֵן יִשְׁרָאֵל פָּרוּ וַיִּשְׂרְצוּ: וַיִּרְבּוּ וַיַּעֲצֻמוּ: כִּמְאֹד מְאֹד וְהִכְפִּילָהֶם: וַיִּרְבּוּ. כָּמָה שְׁנֵאֲמַר הִכְבֵּה כִּצְמַח הַשָּׂדֶה וְהִתְרִיב וְהִתְגַּדְּלָה וְהִתְבַּאֵי בַּעֲדֵי עֲדִיִּים שְׂדֵים נִכְלֵנו וְשִׁעְרָךְ צִפְחָה וְאַתָּה עֲרֵם וְעֶרְיָה:

וַיַּעֲרֵב וַיִּתְּנוּ עֲלֵינוּ עֲבָדָה כָּשָׁה: וַיִּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם וַיַּעֲרֵב וַיִּתְּנוּ עֲלֵנוּ עֲבָדָה כָּשָׁה: וַיִּרְעוּ אֹתָנוּ הַמִּצְרַיִם

הַמִּצְרַיִם כָּמָה שְׁנֵאֲמַר. הִכְבֵּה נִתְחַכְמָה לוֹ פֶּן--יִרְבֶּה וְהָיָה כִּי תִקְרָאנָה מִדְּחָמָה וְנוֹסְתָּהֶם דְּוָא עַל שְׁוֹנֵאֲנוּ וְגַלְתָּם בָּנוּ וְעָקְדָה מִן הָאֶרֶץ: וַיַּעֲנוּנוּ. כָּמָה שְׁנֵאֲמַר. וַיִּשְׁמִי עֲדֵיו שְׂרִי מִסִּים כִּמְעַן עֲנוּתוֹ בְּסִיכָל וְתָם וַיִּבֶן עֲרֵי מִסְכְּנוֹת לַפָּרֹעַ אֶת--

de Láván mind ki akarta irtani, amint irva van: Az arami el akarta veszíteni a mi atyánkat, de ő el-ment Egyiptomba, ott lakott osekély családdal, s ottan nagy, számos és hatalmas nemzetté lett.

וַיֹּדֶעַ Elment Egyiptomba, kényszerítve az Isten pa-rancsa által, s ott lakott; ebből azt érthetjük, hogy Jákob atyánk nem ment Egyiptomba letelepedni, ha-nem csak ideiglenesen ott lakni, a mint irva van:

„És így szólottak Pharaó-hoz: Eljöttünk ez országba lakni, mert nincs legelője szolgálid birkáinak, mivel nagy inség van Kanaán országban; tehát engedd meg, hogy szolgálid Gésen vidékén maradjanak „Cse-kély családdal“, amint irva van: „Hetven lélekkel men-tek őseid Egyiptomba és ime most annyira megsza-porított az Örökkévaló Is-tened, mint a csillagokat.“ És ottan nagy nemzetté

אֶלָּא עַל הַזְכָּרִים וְלִבְנֵי בִקְשׁ לַעֲבֹד אֶת הַכֹּל שְׁנֵאֲמַר אֲרַמִּי אִבְרָאָה. וַיִּרְדַּ מִּצְרַיְמָה וַיִּקְרָ שָׁם בְּמִתִּי מְעַט וַיְהִי שָׁם קִנְיִן, וַיִּרְדַּ עֲצוּם וַיִּרְבּ: וַיִּשְׂרְצוּ מִצְרַיְמָה. אֲנֹכִי עַל פִּי הַדְּבָר: וַיִּקְרָ שָׁם. מִלְּפָר שָׁלָא יִרְדַּ יַעֲקֹב אֲבִינוּ לְהִשְׁתַּכְנַע בְּמִצְרַיִם אֶלָּא קִנְיִן שָׁם. שְׁנֵאֲמַר וַיִּלְאֲמֵרוּ אֵל--פָּרֹעַה קִנְיִן בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן לַעֲבָדֶיךָ כִּי--יִרְבֶּה הָרָעָב בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן וְעַתָּה יִשְׁכְּבוּ--נָא עֲבָדֶיךָ בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן: וַיִּשְׁמִי עֲדֵיו מִסִּים כִּמְעַן עֲנוּתוֹ בְּסִיכָל וְתָם וַיִּבֶן עֲרֵי מִסְכְּנוֹת לַפָּרֹעַ אֶת--

my name

my name

SHE WAS EIGHTY YEARS OLD, STILL A HEALTHY AND ACTIVE PERSON, BUT A LITTLE SLOWED DOWN. SHE WAS CROCHETING FOR US SOME THINGS SO WE COULD HAVE ONE MORE THING TO REMEMBER HER BY. WHEN I WENT TO VISIT MY OTHER RELATIVES IN HUNGARY, I ALSO WENT TO SEE HER IN TRANSYLVANIA.

THERE WAS A FLOOD AT ONE TIME WE DID NOT KNOW ABOUT AND THE HILL AND DALE SCENERY BECAME HILLS AND LAKES. MY COUSIN EDIT WAS DRIVING THERE FOR THE FIRST TIME. SHE REMARKED: " I DID NOT KNOW THAT THERE WERE SO MANY LAKES IN THIS AREA". I WAS LAUGHING AND SAID:" NEITHER DID THE TRANSYLVANIANS KNEW".

IT WAS VERY INTERESTING THAT WHEN I CAME BACK TO THE STATES I READ IN THE NEWSPAPER LATER, THAT THAT AREA HAD A CROP OF CORN LIKE NEVER BEFORE. THIS WAS OF GREAT HELP, BECAUSE CORN IS EATEN DAILY IN THIS POOR COUNTRY. IT IS COOKED FROM CORNMEAL.

ELISABET VISITED US WHEN SHE WAS SIXTY YEARS OLD, IN WILMINGTON DEL. SHE WAS THE VERY FIRST PERSON LET GO FROM COMMUNIST ROMANIA. THE ROMANIANS WERE HOPEFUL THAT SHE WILL STAY, AND THEY CAN TAKE HER HOME. SHE WAS WITH US FOR THREE MONTHS, WHEN HER NEIGHBOR WROTE TO HER THAT HER (SECOND) HUSBAND WAS SICK, AND THAT SHE SHOULD RETURN HOME. WHEN I VISITED HER FOR THE LAST TIME I NOTICED THAT SHE WAS NOT ABLE TO LIGHT SHABBATH CANDLES FOR SOME REASON. FROM THE TIME I RETURNED, I DID, INSTEAD OF HER. FOUR YEARS WENT BY.

IT WAS FRIDAY EVENING AND AS USUALLY I WAS SAYING THE NAME

OF THE PERSON I WAS LIGHTING THE CANDLE FOR. I SAID "AUNT BOZSI".
THE LIGHT WENT OUT. I LIT IT AGAIN AND THE SAME HAPPENED. I SAID
"MY AUNT DIED". I WAS VERY SAD. SHE WAS THE ONE WHO WAS TAKEN GRANTED
TO STAY ALIVE, HOW UNREASONABLE IT SOUNDS. A FEW DAYS LATER THE
LETTER ARRIVED FROM TRANSYLVANIA ABOUT HER DEATH.

IN THE SPRING OF FORTYFOUR WHEN WE WERE ORDERED TO MOVE INTO THE GHETTO, IT WAS IN THE SAME ROOM WITH MY FATHER'S MOM, HIS SISTERS, AND MY COUSIN. PETER WAS STILL WITH US. HE LEFT FOR THE "ARMY" NOT MUCH LATER, HAVING REACHED THE AGE. ONLY IT WAS NOT ARMY, AND HE WAS SHOT NOT MUCH LATER, STILL IN HUNGARY.

THE GHETTO HAD IT'S OWN LAW. THE TEN MOST RESPECTED JEWISH MEN WERE CHOSEN BY THE CHIEF OF POLICE. IT WAS ANNOUNCED, THAT IF ANYONE WOULD BE MISSING FROM THE GHETTO, THOSE TEN WOULD BE EXECUTED AND TEN OTHERS WILL BE CHOSEN. NO ONE WANTED TO MISBEHAVE BUT WE WERE CONVINCED, IF ONE WAS MISSING, THEY WOULD MAKE GOOD ON THEIR PROMISE.

ONE DAY BELA TOBIAS WITH WHOM I USED TO DANCE AND WENT SWIMMING IN THE POOL OF THE RIVER DISAPPARED.. WE WERE SCARED VERY MUCH. WHEN HE WOKE UP FROM HIS NAP BEHIND A BUSH, FROM THE SHADE IN THE GARDEN OF THE TEMPLE, WE WERE VERY RELEIVED.

ON AN EARLY MORNING WE WERE WAKEN FROM OUR SLEEP, AND SEPARATED MEN FROM WOMEN. THE WOMEN WERE HERDED INTO THE SOCIAL HALL OF THE TEMPLE, AND WERE SEARCHED INSIDE OF OUR BODIES, FOR HIDDEN TREASURES. IT MADE NO DIFFERENCE THAT SOME OF US WERE VERY YOUNG GIRLS. THE MIDWIFE WENT AHEAD WITH THE SEARCH IN THE PRESENCE

OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE STANDING AT OUR FEET...BUT, BUT I THINK THEY WERE MORE HUMILIATED THAN WE, THE GIRLS, WHEN THE SEARCH DID NOT TURN UP ONE SINGLE " HIDDEN TREASURE" IN THE TWO HUNDRED FAMILIES.

WHEN THE SEARCH WAS OVER, WE WERE TOLD TO PACK ONE EXTRA PAIR OF SHOES, ONE MORE DRESS, UNDERWEAR AND GET READY FOR THE TRIP TO GO TO WORK.

WHILE OUR BODIES WERE SEARCHED, OUR LIVING SPACE WAS GONE THROUGH ^{BY} THE GUARDS. IT WAS TIME TO SHOW, WHAT WE PUT IN THE RUCKSACK FOR APPROVAL. THE NEXT THING WAS, WE WERE ORDERED TO GATHER IN THE TEMPLE. WE WERE GIVEN EACH ONE OF US, A BREAD FOR THE TRIP WE WERE MAKING TO THE BRICK FACTORY. (WE DID NOT KNOW WHERE WE WERE GOING), WHERE THE TRAINS RAN TO AUSCHWITZ FROM.

FOR A LONG TIME IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO TALK ABOUT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO ME IN AUSCHWITZ AND THE OTHER CAMP LANZING, DURING INTERMENT. WHEN PEOPLE ASKED ME ABOUT IT, I CHANGED THE SUBJECT. THIRTYFIVE YEARS LATER SOMEONE ASKED ME HOW DID I ESCAPE FROM AUSCHWITZ. I STILL COULD NOT SAY IT BUT, BUT THIS IS WHAT I WROTE DOWN FOR HER AS A REPLY:

I DID NOT ESCAPE FROM AUSCHWITZ.

IT IS TRUE THAT THE PLACE IS SEVEN THOUSAND MILES AWAY, BUT

IT HAS FOLLOWED ME EVERY INCH ON MY WAY...SO MANY THINGS REMIND ME OF IT, THAT THERE IS NO HOPE FOR ME TO ESCAPE IT EVER..... A STRIPED DRESS, A THIGHTLY PACKED ELEVATOR, A BARBED WIRE FENCE, A SMOKING CHIMNEY, WIESENTHAL, A CATTLE TRAIN IN MOTION AN ARTICLE ABOUT MENGELE, A DOG WITH TIGHT CHAIN AROUND THE NECK, THE SMELL OF CLORAX, MEAT BURNING ON THE NEIGHBORS BARBAQUE..JUST TO MENTION A FEW EXAMPLES.

I ALMOST DID NOT LEAVE IT, LIKE SO MANY WHO WERE LAID OUT, ONE ON TOP OF OTHER, LIKE LOGS OF WOOD. THE TRUCKS CAME FOR THOSE TWICE A WEEK, AND WHEN THEY WERE PACKED TIGHT, THE PEOPLE WHO WERE JUST HALF DEAD WERE SAT ON TOP OF THE BODIES TO BE CARRIED TO THE OWENS. I LIVED IN LAGER "BIII" BARRACKS 5A. I WITNESSED THESE THINGS FROM THERE. IT WAS NEXT TO THE BUILDING CALLED "AMBULANCIA". SICK PEOPLE IN DESPAIR WALKED IN THERE IN HOPE OF GETTING HELP, BUT NOT MANY CAME OUT.

I WOULD NOT HAVE ENTERED THAT PLACE ON MY OWN, BUT I WAS TAKEN THERE WHEN I COLLAPSED AFTER A BEATING AND IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT I HAD DIPHTERIA. THE LUCKY THING WAS THAT JUST A WEEK EARLIER AN ISOLATION WARD HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED IN A DIFFERENT LOCATION.

THERE HAD BEEN A RUMOR THAT THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE WOULD VISIT AUSCHWITZ AND THE GERMANS WOULD HAVE TO

ANSWER THE QUESTION OF WHERE THEY KEPT PEOPLE WITH CONTAGIOUS DISEASE. THERE HAD NEVER BEEN A PLACE LIKE THAT IN AUSCHWITZ AND THE OLD INMATES WERE AWED. IT HAD BEEN MUCH EASIER TO ELIMINATE THE SICK. NO ONE RECOVERED FROM DIPHTHERIA ANYWAY. WE WERE NOT THERE TO BE CURED. WE WERE THERE TO SHOW THE RED CROSS VISITORS THAT THERE WAS A PLACE FOR THOSE SICK.

NO MEDICINE WAS GIVEN TO US. A WOMAN NAMED ELISABETH TOOK OUR PULSE AND TEMPERATURE EVERY DAY, AND OF COURSE METICULOUS RECORDS WERE KEPT FOR DR. MENGELE'S INSPECTION.. HE CAME TWO OR THREE TIMES A WEEK. I REALLY DON'T KNOW HOW MANY TIMES, ONLY THAT IT SEEMED MUCH TOO OFTEN TO US. TIME IN AUSCHWITZ WAS COUNTED FROM MEAL TO MEAL, NOT DAY TO DAY. AT LEAST FOR THOSE WHO WERE INTERESTED IN FOOD. THOSE OF US WITH LUMPS IN OUR THROATS WERE NOT VERY INTERESTED.

MENGELE CAME KICKING IN THE DOOR. HE HAD ALL THE DOOR HANDLES TAKEN OFF, LEST HE MIGHT TOUCH THEM THROUGH FORCE OF HABIT AND BE CONTAMINATED BY OUR JEWISH GERMS. (I AM CERTAIN HE HAD ALL THE PREVENTIVE SHOTS).

THERE WERE FORTY NAKED PEOPLE INSIDE. NONE HAD ANYTHING TO WEAR. I ARRIVED NAKED, LOOKED AROUND, AND I SAW MOST PEOPLE SLEEPING ON THE FLOOR. THERE WERE TWO THREE-TIERED BUNKS ON THE

RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROOM. I WAS ASSIGNED TO THE FIRST BED ON THE
THE MIDDLE TIER. THERE WERE ONLY THREE PEOPLE TO ONE BED WITH TWO
BLANKETS. AN INCREDIBLE LUXURY!!!!!!!!!!!!

UP TO THAT TIME I SLEPT ON THE WET FLOOR FOR MONTHS. WE HAD
HAD ENOUGH ROOM ONLY SO LONG AS EVERYONE SLEPT SARDINE LIKE, ON
HER SIDE, FACING IN ONE DIRECTION. PEOPLE SOMETIMES MOVED IN THEIR
DREAMS AND THAT HAD DISASTROUS COSEQUENCES. ONES I WOKE UP CHOKING.
SOMEONE MOVED AND SLIPPED A KNEE AROUND MY NECK IN HER SLEEP, AND
TRYING TO FREE IT FROM THE GRIP OF MY CHIN, SHE ALMOST CHOKED ME.

IN THE " HOSPITAL" I FELT FORTUNATE TO BE ABLE TO SLEEP ON
SOMETHING THAT ALMOST LOOKED LIKE A BED, ONLY TWO MORE PEOPLE, AND
TWO BLANKETS TO COVER US. I WAS NO LONGER SHY GETTING OFF THE BED
NAKED WHEN I HAD TO GO TO THE "BATHROOM", WHICH WAS A COVERED PAIL
IN THE CORNER. TWO WEEKS LATER , WHEN THE RED CROSS PEOPLE WERE
ABOUT TO ARRIVE, WE WERE EACH GIVEN A PAJAMA TOPS. THAT WAS WHEN
WE STARTED TO HAVE PROBLEM GETTING OFF THE BED, BEING PARTIALLY
COVERED BY THE PAJAMA TOPS. WE AGREED THAT WHOEVER HAD TO GO IN
THE CORNER COULD WRAP HERSELF IN ONE OF THE BLANKETS.

A KICK ON THE DOOR AND IN WALKED THE GOOD DOCTOR.

HE WAS A GOOD LOOKING, SPOTLESS, CRESELESS GENTLEMAN WITH
SHINY RIDING BOOTS AND MATCHING GLOVES. HE SPORTED A HORSE WHIP.

(I DID NOT SEE HORSES IN AUSCHWITZ.) HE SAT DOWN AT THE TABLE, ELIZABETH HANDED HIM OUR RECORDS, AND WE ALL, WHO WERE ABLE TO STAND UP, HAD TO TAKE OFF THE PAJAMA TOPS, AND STAND NAKED IN FRONT OF HIM, ONE BY ONE TO BE LOOKED AT... THE FIRST TIME THIS HAPPENED I WATCHED. I NOTICED THAT THE FATTER ONE LOOKED, THE BETTER CHANCES ONE HAD FOR PASSING THE "TEST".

THIS WAS NOT THE FIRST TIME I MET HIM, BUT THAT TIME THREE MONTHS BEFORE, I ONLY HAD TO PROVE MYSELF YOUNG ENOUGH, THOUGH NOT TOO YOUNG. HE WAS WHIMSICAL, I WAS TOLD. HE WOULD SELECT ONLY PEOPLE WITH BROWN EYES IN THE CAMP FOR WORKGROUP. NEXT DAY IT WOULD BE THE ROUND KNEED ONES FOR THE GASCHAMBER.

AS I CAME IN FRONT OF HIM, I PUFFED MY LUNGS FULL OF AIR, SO THAT I LOOKED FATTER, AND I PUT ON A CONFIDENT FACE. I HAD A FEELING THAT HE SAW THROUGH ME, BUT HE WAS "NICE" AND LET ME PASS. I DID NOT KNOW AT THE TIME OF HIS PLAN OF NOT ALLOWING ANYONE OUT OF THERE ALIVE ANYWAY. HE LET ME SUFFER THE ANXIETY FOR WEEKS, KNOWING ALL ALONG THAT HE WOULD MARCH US INTO THE GAS CHAMBERS AFTER OUR GRANDPARENTS, PARENTS, UNCLES AUNTS, BROTHERS, SISTERS RIGHT AFTER THE RED CROSS PEOPLE WOULD HAVE COME AND GONE. THAT WAS HIS REAL PLAN.

WHAT HE DID NOT KNOW WAS THAT THERE IS ALWAYS A SLIP, SOMEHOW.

THERE IS ALWAYS ONE WHO STAYS ALIVE AFTER BEING SHOT, BURIED UNDER THE DEAD, AND MANAGES TO CRAWL OUT AND ESCAPE TO TELL THE WORLD WHAT HAPPENED. HERE I AM.

THERE WERE FORTY OF US IN THAT ROOM. EVERY TIME MENGELE CAME HE MARKED THOSE WHO COULD NOT STAND UP STRAIGHT. THEY WERE CARRIED AWAY AT NIGHT, THREE ON A STRETCHER. BETWEEN VISITS, THE DOCTORS WOULD SEND IN MORE PATIENTS. THE NUMBER STAYED AT FORTY. WE NEVER RECEIVED ANY MEDICATION FOR OUR ILLNESSES.

I JUST REMEMBER THAT ELISABETH USED TO TAKE A LITTLE BLOOD FROM ONE SICK PERSON AND INJECTED IT WITH THE SAME NEEDLE INTO AN OTHER PERSON. IT DID NOT SEEM TO HELP.

IN GREAT SECRECY A NURSE STOLE AND SMUGGLED IN TWO CUPS OF MILK FOR US. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN RISKY TO DISTRIBUTE IT IN A LIQUID FORM TO BEDFAST PEOPLE, IT WOULD HAVE SPILT. WHEN IT HAD TURNED INTO YOGHURT, EACH OF US HAD A SPOONFULL. THOSE OF US NOT DYING YET.

AT AN OTHER TIME A JAR OF VITAMIN PILLS WAS STOLEN. THE NURSE QUICKLY GAVE US EACH A PILL LEST SHE WOULD BE CAUGHT REDHANDED. WHEN WE REALIZED THAT OUR TONGUES HAD TURNED YELLOW FROM THE VITAMIN PILLS, WE HAD SOME "FUN" STICKING THEM OUT AT EACH OTHER. (ANYTHING, JUST TO TAKE OFF OUR MINDS OF THE UNESCAPABLE IMMINENT DEATH).

WE RECEIVED FOOD THREE TIMES A DAY, BUT I WAS INTERESTED

IN BREAD ONLY. I SAW PEOPLE DIE ALL AROUND ME, LOOKED TO ME LIKE SUFFOCATING (OF COURSE I WAS NOT EXPERIENCED IN ALL THE WAYS OF DYING YET) AS A RESULT OF THE DISEASE, BUT I DID NOT PLAN ON DOING THE SAME. I JUST TURNED SEVENTEEN AND I VERY MUCH WANTED TO STAY ALIVE, IN SPITE OF THE EVIDENCE THAT NO ONE WOULD. I HAD A LUMP IN MY TROAT AND WANTED TO GET RID OF IT. I LET MY BREAD RATION DRY AND SWALLOWING BITS OF IT, IT MUST HAVE HELPED SOME WAY FOR ELIZABETH TOLD ME THAT I WAS GETTING BETTER. I WAS FEELING BETTER TOO. ACTUALLY I NEVER FELT VERY SICK PHYSICALLY. IT WAS JUST WATCHING ALL THOSE POOR PEOPLE DIE HELPLESSLY, WAS A VERY DEPRESSING EXPERIENCE.

SHORTLY AFTER, PERHAPS A WEEK LATER, THERE WAS A HURRIED, STRANGE EXCITEMENT IN THE AIR. ELIZABETH TOLD US THAT IT WAS IMPERATIVE THAT THOSE WHO COULD, WALK GO TO THE ENTRANCE OF THE BUILDING. THREE OF US COULD. THERE WE WERE GIVEN EACH OF US SHOES AND A DRESS. I FELT FORTUNATE THAT I GOT A GOOD WOOLEN DRESS THAT EVEN FIT ME. THAT FITTING DRESS WOULD BE A LIFE-SAVOR FOR ME THE NIGHT OF THAT DAY.

AS WE WALKED OUT THE DOOR, WE AS WELL AS OTHERS FROM ADJOINING ROOMS WERE QUICKLY LED BY A FEW NURSES TO LAGER BII. WHERE WE WERE PLACED IN A BARRACK CALLED BLOCK.

LATER I SAW SOME MORE OF THE NURSES COME INTO THE BLOCK

BESIDE US, AND I NOTICED THAT A HUGE FIRE WAS BURNING WHERE THE HOSPITAL HAD BEEN.

I THEN REALIZED THAT THE BUILDING HAD BEEN SET AFIRE.

I ASKED ONE OF THE NURSES WHAT WAS GOING ON, BUT SHE RUDELY BARKED AT ME AND WOULD NOT ANSWER MY QUESTION. SHE LOOKED VERY UPSET AND I LEFT HER .

MAYBE SHE SAW WHAT HAPPENED AND COULD NOT SPEAK FROM THE SHOCK.

EXTERMINATIONS WERE BY THEN GOING ON AT FULL SPEAD.

IT WAS NEAR THE END OF NINETEENFORTYFOUR.

THE AIR WAS CHILLY AND THERE WAS A FROST ON THE GROUND IN IN THE MORNING. I KEPT MYSELF WARM BY QUICKLY WASHING MYSELF IN ICECOLD WATER.

AUSCHWITZ WAS BUSY BURNING JEWS.

THE SOUND OF SHOOTING COULD BE HEARD FROM ALL SIDES.

PERHAPS OUR LIBERATORS WERE COMING NEARER.

I SAW THE CHIMNEYS IN THE EVENING BELCHING FLAMES AT THE SKY. THE AIR WAS FULL OF SMOKE, THE SMOKE OF BURNING FLESH. THAT OF MY MOTHER'S WHO GAVE ME LIFE. AND OF MY FATHER'S, FAMILY AND FRIENDS. I KNEW THAT THOSE WERE HUMAN BEINGS BURNING THERE, YET IT WAS DIFFICULT TO BELEIVE THAT THEY HAD BEEN MURDERED BEFORE, GASSED.

UP TO THAT POINT I HAD SEEN PEOPLE DIE ONLY WHEN THEY DECIDED THEMSELVES THAT IT WAS SENSELESS TO KEEP ON LIVING, AND OF COURSE IN THE HOSPITAL. A FEW DAYS IN THE BII. LEFT NO DOUBT AS TO WHAT WAS REALLY GOING ON. BEFORE THAT, DURING SELECTION I ALWAYS PRETENDED THEY WERE FOR ASSEMBLING WORK GROUPS. ACTUALLY THAT HAPPENED ONLY ONCE IN A WHILE.

THIS FALSE BELIEF CHANGED THE DAY WHEN I WITNESSED A SELECTION IN FRONT OF A BLOCK. THE PRISONERS WERE DRIVEN OUT SINGLE FILE AND HOOKED OUT BY THEIR NECKS WITH THE CROOK OF A WALKING STICK. THEY WERE SCREAMING, TERROR STRICKEN. NO ONE WAS COMPOSED BY THIS TIME.

I WAS FROZEN, I KEPT ON LOOKING AT THE SCENE IN SHEER TERROR. MY ILLUSIONS OF SURVIVAL WERE GONE. I REALIZED THAT THE ONES HOOKED BY THE NECK WERE OLDER OR SICKLY LOOKING. THOSE WERE DEFINITELY NOT A WORKGROUP TO BE.. IT DOWNED ON ME THAT ALL OF US WERE GETTING GRADUALLY MORE UNFIT AS TIME WENT ON, AS LONG AS WE STAYED IN AUSCHWITZ.

THAT DAY WAS FULL OF TERROR FOR ME. I RECALLED THE HOSPITAL WITH THE PATIENTS BURNING INSIDE, THOSE WHO COULD NOT WALK.

AS DARKNESS CAME THE FLAMES FROM THE CHIMNEYS SEEMED HIGHER THAN EVER. THE NURSE WHO WAS RUDE TO ME EARLIER CAME SEARCHING FOR ME FROM THE OTHER BLOCK. "COME WITH ME, IT IS TOO CROWDED HERE"

SHE SAID. IT WAS OBVIOUSLY JUST AS CROWDED IN HER BLOCK AS EVERYWHERE. A CERTAIN NUMBER OF PRISONERS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE IN EACH BLOCK, WHICH WAS A LONG WINDOWLESS BUILDING. (WHAT I MEAN THOSE VERY NARROW OPENINGS ON THE TOP OF THE SLANTING ROOF I DID NOT CALL WINDOWS.)

THERE WERE TWO DOORS, ONE ON EACH END. THE NURSE ARRANGED FOR ME TO STAY WITH HER. SHE KNEW SOMETHING THAT I DID NOT BUT SHE STILL WOULD NOT TALK.

AT NIGHT A FEW GERMAN SOLDIERS CAME IN WITH MACHINE GUNS AND DOGS. SOME OF THEM BLOCKED ONE OF THE DOORS AND THE OTHERS STARTED SHOUTING "HINAUS!! HINAUS!!!!" AND DRIVING OUT EVERYBODY THROUGH THE DOOR ON THE OTHER END. EVERYBODY KNEW THIS WAS NO WORK SELECTION.

THIS WAS TO BE OUR TURN IN THE GASCHAMBERS.

THERE SEEMED TO BE NO WAY OUT OF THIS SITUATION.

THE GERMANS WERE SHOUTING AND DRIVING OUT THE PEOPLE MERCILESSLY, THE DOGS JOINING IN, SNAPPING AND BARKING IN A BLOODCURDLING WAY. ONE WOULD HAVE HAD A HARD TIME TELLING WHETHER DOG OR MASTER SEEMED MORE BLOODTHIRSTY.

MY NURSE FRIEND GRABBED MY HAND AND STARTED TO PULL ME IN THE OTHER DIRECTION. SHE PUSHED ME QUICKLY INTO A CIRCLE AROUND THE JEWISH DOCTOR. SHE WAS A LEAN TALL HARDENED WOMAN. ONE OF THE SOLDIERS WALKED UP TO HER AND THE DOCTOR SAID IN A VERY CONVINCING TONE

" I MUST HAVE MY NURSES". THEN SHE SAW ME, A NEW FACE, BUT SHE COULD TELL THAT MY WELL FITTING DRESS WOULD NOT GIVE ME AWAY. THE NURSES ALL HAD BETTER DRESSES THAN THE CROWD, AND SO DID I.

WE STARED AT EACH OTHER WHILE THE GERMAN DECIDED TO RESUME HIS BUSINESS OF DRIVING THE REST OUT. HE FORGOT TO ASK FOR THE NUMBER OF NURSES.

AND I WAS SAVED THE SECOND TIME THAT DAY!!!!!!!!!!!!

I HAD TO GO BACK TO MY BLOCK IN THE MORNING BEFORE COUNTING STARTED. WHEN I OPENED THE DOOR I COULD NOT SEE A SOUL.

ONCE MORE IT WAS THE END OF THE WORLD FOR ME. THE BLOCK, JUST LIKE THE ONE I SLEPT IN, WAS TAKEN AWAY DURING THE NIGHT IN TO THE GASCHAMBERS, INTO THE FLAMES. I DID NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO. I WAS PANIC STRICKEN AGAIN.

I HEARD A WOMAN'S VOICE CALLING OUT NUMBERS.....I HAD NO PLACE TO GO. SHE ASKED ME A QUESTION, BUT I WAS DAZED AND FOUND MYSELF UNABLE TO TALK. SHE TOOK ME BY THE HAND FROM BLOCK TO BLOCK. THE NUMBER OF THE BLOCKS HAD TO BE RIGHT. SHE ASKED PEOPLE IF THEY KNEW WHERE I BELONGED. I BELONGED TO NONE OF THE BLOCKS.

I BELONGED TO THE GASCHAMBERS WITH THE REST OF MY BLOCK, WITH THOSE WHO HAD GONE THERE THE NIGHT BEFORE. MY TERROR FROM THIS REALIZATION WAS UNBEARABLE.....

ALL OF A SUDDEN THERE WAS A TUMULT, AN UNHEARD OF THING. THEN EVERY BLOCK AELTESTE SHOUTED, "SZTIMUJE"! A VOICE SHOUTING INSTRUCTIONS WAS HEARD, THAT WE ALL SHOULD LINE UP, FIVE TO A ROW, TO BE TATTOOED . THIS WAS GOOD NEWS.

PEOPLE WHO WERE TATTOOED WERE USED IN STILL AN OTHER WAY OF FOOLING THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS, SHOWING THAT GERMANS KEPT ACCURATE RECORDS OF ALL. BUT I WAS HAPPY ANYWAY. AS WE STOOD IN LINE WE DISCUSSED THE POSSIBILITIES OF BEING EXCHANGED AT THE END OF THE WAR FOR GERMAN WAR PRISONERS.. WHILE WE TALKED, A PERSON STARTED TO COUNT THREEHUNDRED PEOPLE AT THE END OF THE LINE. I WAS AMONG THEM. WE HAD TO MAKE AN ABOUT FACE AND WE WERE MARCHED OFF TO A PLACE WHERE WE HAD A SHOWER, WERE GIVEN UNDERWEAR, CLOTHES, SHOES, SOCKS, AND WERE LED TO A TRAIN THAT TOOK US TO AUSTRIA, ON A THREE DAY TRIP. SIX MONTHS LATER THE AMERICAN ARMY LIBERATED ME THERE. I WAS SEVENTY SIX POUNDS, VERY WEEK, BUT NOT BROKEN IN SPIRIT. THIS, HOWEVER, WAS NOT THE END OF THE WAR FOR ME.

I HAVE EVER SINCE BEEN FIGHTING NOT TO BREAK UNDER THE WEIGHT OF MY MEMORIES OF WHAT HAPPENED TO ME AND TO MY FAMILY.

OUT OF FORTY TWO RELATIVES THAT WENT TO DIFFERENT CONCENTRATION CAMPS, THIRTY NINE WERE KILLED AND NONE OF MY IMMEDIATE FAMILY RETURNED. THE SURVIVORS WERE TWO SISTERS ZSUZSI



SEP . 68

Our famous relatives, grandmother's Sister
and Husband.



Sunie, Husband Zoli
zva, Marisa



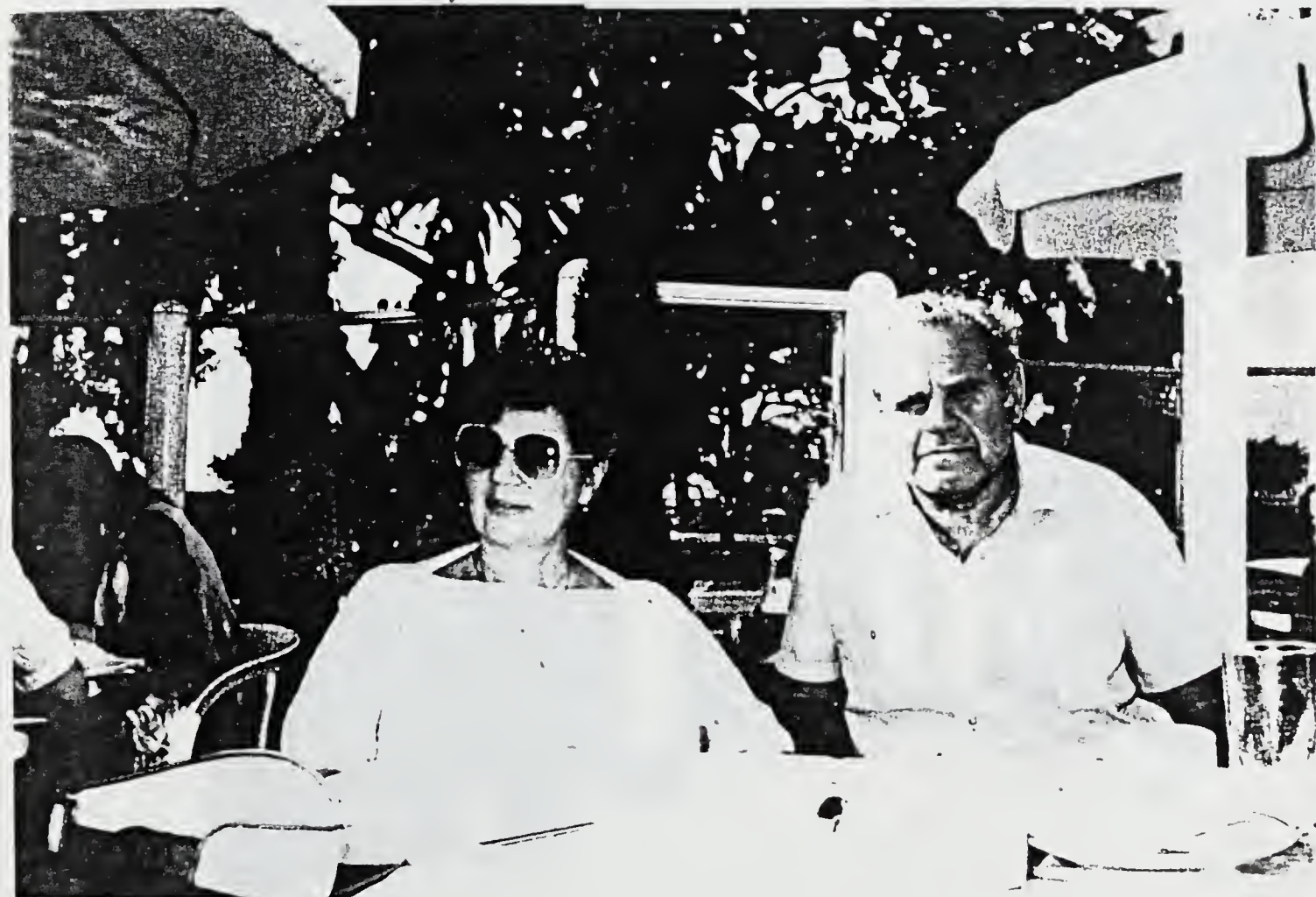
-Frede Pollack-

Mara, Eliezer and Carola 84/85



Agi, mylager-sister.

Loelo, Zolan Mara Eliezer
Gidon Eliezer, Mara



Mr + Mrs. ^{Agi} Alex Reitenbaum

Zoli and 89 AAA
Yussis Family



Tawn + Jin 1942



Mara + Elmer's Family



AND MACA, MY COUSINS, ABOUT SAME AGE AS I.

WHEN I RETURNED TO HUNGARY AND NO LONGER LIVED IN A CROWDED CONDITIONS, THE SIGNS OF HEARING LOSS BECAME MUCH MORE APPARENT. PEOPLE TALKING BEHIND ME NOTICED THAT I WAS NOT PAYING ATTENTION.

IN THE NOISY FACTORY WHERE I WORKED IN AUSTRIA, I HAD NO CHANCE TO BE AWARE OF THE EXTENT OF MY HEARING LOSS. IT BECAME CLEAR WHEN I WAS EXAMINED BY AN AUDIOLOGIST. THE DOCTOR WHO THEN QUESTIONED ME ABOUT PREVIOUS ILLNESSES WOULD NOT BELIEVE WHEN I TOLD HIM ABOUT DIPHTHERIA IN AUSCHWITZ AND THAT I RECOVERED WITHOUT MEDICATION.

HE THOUGHT IT MIGHT DEFINITELY HAVE DAMAGED MY HEART AS WELL AS KILLED THE HEARING NERVES THROUGH TOXIN POISONING.

I WAS NOT FULLY AWARE AT THAT TIME HOW MUCH I MISSED, BUT THE WORLD BECAME MUCH QUIETER AROUND ME, WHILE I HEARD NOISES INSIDE MY HEAD. MOST OF ALL I MISSED THE VOICES OF MY FAMILY MEMBERS WHO WERE NO LONGER THERE.

AUSCHWITZ AND THE TERROR OF IT FOLLOWS ME EVERYWHERE.

I WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO ESCAPE IT.

WHEN WE WERE TURNED AROUND WHILE STANDING IN LINE FOR GETTING TATTOOED AND MARCHING OFF, WE DID NOT FULLY REALISE WHAT A GREAT FORTUNE HAD BEFALLEN US. IT WAS A MOST WONDERFUL THING TO GET OUT OF AUSCHWITZ AT THE RIGHT TIME. ON GETTING WEARABLE CLOTHES AND THREE DAYS OF RATIONS WE KNEW WE ARE GOING TO BE ON A TRIP THAT TAKES THREE DAYS. THIS TIME , THE CATTLE CAR WE TRAVELLED IN WAS NOT OVERCROWDED. WE ACTUALLY HAD A CLEAN WOODEN FLOOR TO LAY ON. AND SINCE WE HAD A GUARD WITH US IN EACH WAGON, THE DOOR WAS NOT CLOSED AND WE COULD ENJOY THE SCENERY.

THE THIRD DAY WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF OUR TRIP. WE WERE IN THE MOUNTAINS OF AUSTRIA AND WE KNEW IT TO BE OUR DESTINATION. WE ALSO LEARNED THE DATE, SINCE WE SAW THAT THE PASSING CEMETERIES WERE FULL OF FLOWERS, AND WE COULD SEE CANDLES BURNING THERE ON THE GRAVES. IT WAS "ALL SAINTS DAY", WHEN THE DEAD RELATIVES WERE HONORED THIS WAY.

IT WAS ON THIS TRIP THAT I MADE FRIENDS WITH AGI WEISS, A FRIENDSHIP WE STILL TREASURE. AGI SEEMED VERY LONELY AND DEPRESSED. I SAW THAT WHEN EVERYONE ATE FROM THE RATIONS, SHE DID NOT TOUCH HERS. THE GUARD WITH US IN THE WAGON SAW WHAT WE HAD TO EAT AND WHEN THE TRAIN STOPPED AT A CARROT FIELD, HE JUMPED OFF THE TRAIN AND PULLED FROM THE EARTH SOME CARROTS. HE GAVE ME ONE OF THEM.

I HAD A SHARP TIN. I SLICED THE CARROT, AND TOOK AGI'S BREAD, AND SLICED OFF A PIECE. THEN I TOOK HER MARGARINE RATION, AND WITH THE CARROT AND THAT I MADE A CHECKERBOARD OUT OF HER BREAD. IT WAS TO ENCOURAGE HER. SHE SEEMED TO BE YOUNGER AND I FELT SHE NEEDED SOME ENCOURAGEMENT TO EAT LIKE WHEN I WAS A CHILD. AND, AGI, SURPRISED THAT SOMEONE CARES WHETHER SHE EATS OR NOT, ATE THE WHOLE SLICE OF CARROT BOARD. IT MADE ME FEEL SUCCESSFUL AND HER MORE OUTGOING.

WE BECAME FRIENDS TO THE POINT WHEN WE LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AS SISTERS.

ON RETURNING TO TRANSYLVANIA AGI GOT MARRIED AND HAD TWO CHILDREN AND TWO GRANDCHILDREN. THE FAMILY EMMIGRATED TO ISRAEL AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY, AND ARE VERY HAPPY THERE.

WHEN AGI WENT BACK TO LOOK FOR THE FAMILY , SHE FOUND HER FATHER AND SISTER. HER MOTHER AND A LITTLE BROTHER PERISHED.

I DID NOT KNOW ABOUT AGI FOR TWENTYFOUR YEARS.

WHEN WE MOVED TO LOS ANGELES, WE WERE INVITED BY OLD FRIENDS WE KNEW FROM POCKING REFUGEE CAMP. WE MET THERE OTHERS FROM POCKING, AND FROM OTHER PLACES WE DID NOT KNOW.

IT WAS THE YEARLY PARTY OF THE FRIEDMANN'S. THERE WAS HIS FRIEND ALSO FROM POCKING, CHARLIE LIGETI AND EVA HIS WIFE. THERE WERE OTHERS WE NEVER MET BEFORE, AND TIBI DEUTSCH, MILLIE, ZOLI'S WIFE.

AS WE WERE INTRODUCED TO THE GUESTS WE DID NOT KNOW, I LOOKED AT EVA JUDOVITS AND SAID "WAIT A SECOND AND WE WILL FIND OUT HOW ARE WE RELATED". SHE LOOKED AT ME QUESTIONINGLY. I ASKED HER "WHERE ARE YOU FROM?" SHE SAID "MAROSVAVARHELY". I SAID ~~TO HER~~ "I KNOW A GIRL FROM THERE, HER NAME IS AGI". SHE TOLD ME THAT SHE DOES NOT KNOW ANY AGIS FROM THERE. "WHAT IS YOUR NAME?" I ASKED. SHE SAID "EVA". "DID YOU HAVE A LITTLE BROTHER NAMED TOMY?" "YES" SHE SAID. I TOLD HER THAT AGI WEISS WAS HER SISTER AND SHE AGREED. "WHERE IS AGI NOW?" I ASKED HER. IN A FEW WEEKS EVA WAS EXPECTING HER FROM TRANSYLVANIA. I FELT I HAD A SISTER BACK AND WAS VERY HAPPY.

SHE CAME AND WE VISITED AND WHEN I WENT TO SEE MY AUNT I ALSO VISITED HER AND HUSBAND ON THE WAY. THE SON WAS STILL WITH THEM BUT ERICA HER DAUGHTER WAS IN ISRAEL WITH HUSBAND. THEY STARTED THE EMMIGRATION OF THE FAMILY.

WHEN WE ARRIVED IN LENZING, GOT OUT FROM THE WAGON, ~~WE WERE~~ WE WERE MARCHED DOWN ON A FOOTPATH BETWEEN THE HIGHWAY AND A BROOK. AT THE END OF THE MARCH THERE WAS A BOMBED OUT PAPER FACTORY WHERE WE WERE GOING TO LIVE. THE SURROUNDING WAS OF GREAT BEAUTY AND FOR A MOMENT ONE COULD FORGET THE CIRCUMSTANCES. THERE WAS ANOTHER SURPRISE. THE LARGE ROOM THAT WAS UNTOUCHED BY THE BOMB WAS FURNISHED WITH THREE TIERED BEDS FOR TWOHUNDRED FIFTY PEOPLE. THE OTHER FIFTY

WERE PLACED IN THE SMALLER ROOM.

WE HAD BEDS!!! ON THE BEDS THERE WERE MATTRESSES, WELL, PAPER SACKS, FILLED WITH SHREDDED PAPER. THERE WAS A PILLOW OF SAME. WE GOT TWO BLANKETS ON EACH BED. WE WERE ISSUED A DISH TO EAT FROM. A TOOTHBRUSH, TOOTH POWDER, AND SOAP AND A SMALL TOWEL.

HEY!!!!!!!!!! THESE PEOPLE DID NOT KNOW WE WERE JEWISH!!!!!!!!!! WE WERE GIVEN FOOD!!!!!!!!. A NICE SLICE OF BREAD FOR BREAKFAST WITH MARGARINE, COFFEE,GGOD SOUP FOR LUNCH, AND CHEESE OR WURST FOR SUPPER.

WE LIVED IN A DREAMWORLD FOR THREE WEEKS.

THAT WAS WHEN THE OVERSEER CAME FROM MAUTHAUSEN AND DISCOVERED THE GREAT MISTAKE OF FEEDING JEWS FOOD.. HE BLEW THE SECRET.

WELL NOBODY ASKED US!!!!!!!!!!

IN THE MEANTIME A DOCTOR LOOKED US OVER TO SEE WHAT KIND OF FACTORY WORK HE SHOULD ENSIGN US TO. THERE WERE A FEW GROUPS DOING DIFFERENT JOBS. I WAS REFERRED TO THE "PUTZKOLONE" AND WAS GIVEN A NUMBER 849. THIS WAS A TIN PLATE WORN ON MY LEFT WRIST.

THE PUTZKOLONE WORKED IN THE HOTTEST PART OF THE FACTORY. THE VISCOSA WAS DRIED IN THE MACHINES THERE CALLED "TROCKNERS". MY JOB WAS TO GET THE DRY VISCOSA OUT FROM THESE TERRIBLE BIG MACHINES TROUGH A SMALL WINDOW. I WORKED WITH A LONG STEEL ROD.

ITS WEIGHT MADE MY HANDS TERRIBLY HURT. WE ALSO HAD TO UNLOAD THE MATERIALS. THOSE WERE USED IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING THE VISCOSA. LARGE BALES, PAPER LIKE AND LARGE BOTTLES OF ACIDS CAME ON THE RAILROADS CLOSE TO THE FACTORY. FIRST WE PUSHED THE WAGONS TO THE CLOSEST POINT TO THE DOOR. CLEARLY WE WERE UNSKILLED WORKERS AND WE GOT HURT. I HAD TROUBLE WITH THE CORRECT HOLD AND THESE THINGS WERE VERY HEAVY, SOMETIMES WE HAD GAS IN THE FACTORY THAT MADE US DIZZY. OUR GROUP WAS NOT PROVIDED GAS MASKS, LIKE OTHER NON-JEWISH WORKERS.

OUR ENERGY THAT WAS GAINED FROM THE THREE WEEKS OF VALUABLE FOOD WAS SOON EXHAUSTED. THE SOUP WE GOT NOW WAS COOKED FROM TEN KG. OF POTATOES FOR THREEHUNDRED FACTORY WORKERS.

OUR PART OF THE FACTORY WAS VERY HOT, BUT IT SEEMED TO BALANCE THE VERY COLD NIGHTS AT OUR SLEEPING PLACE AS THE TYROLIAN WINTER WAS IN FULL FORCE.

AGI AND IRENE WAS WORKING IN THE "MAHLER KOLONE", BUT I WAS TALKING TO THEM DAILY. THERE WAS A GIRL IN MY GROUP. A TALL OLIVE SKINNED GIRL NAMED EDITH POLLAK FROM SZEGED. SHE WORKED NEXT TO ME, AND MARCHED BESIDE ME. SHE LOVED TO COMPLAIN ABOUT THINGS THAT COULD NOT BE HELPED. THIS TIME IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE.

EDITH WAS TELLING ME ABOUT THE PERSON WHO WAS SLEEPING

NEXT TO HER BED. EDITH SAID THE GIRL WAS MOANING ALL NIGHT NOT LETTING HER SLEEP. I TOLD EDITH THAT THE BED NEXT TO ME WAS EMPTY AND WE CAN GIVE IT A TRY WETHER IT IS GOING TO DISTURB ME. I ALREADY HAD SOME HEARING LOSS FROM THE DYPHTERIA. "TELL THE GIRL," I TOLD EDITH "TO TRY TO SLEEP THERE IF SHE WANTED TO!"

I HAD NO IDEA SHE WAS TALKING ABOUT IRENE. IRENE WAS HAPPY TO COME SINCE SHE ALREADY KNEW ME, HAVING MADE FRIENDS ON THE TRAIN.

WHEN SLEEPING TIME CAME SHE DID START MOANING AND I WAS VERY CONCERNED. IT WAS THE MIDDLE EAR INFECTION OPERATION THAT DID NO HEAL. I USED TO MASSAGE HER NECK AND HEAD TO PROMOTE CIRCULATION, AND I PRAYED FOR HEALING UNTIL I DRAGGED HER TO THE CAMP DOCTOR SHE WAS SO SCARED FROM, THAT SHE WILL "ELIMINATE" HER.

THE DOCTOR CLEANED THE OPEN WOUND AND IRENE STARTED TO SMILE, SHE SMILED THE FIRST TIME THAT I KNEW HER.

THE WEATHER GOT WORSE AND WORSE AND WE WERE VERY COLD. WE FINALLY DECIDED THAT WE SHOULD BANK ON, ON OUR BLANKETS AND SLEEP IN ONE BED. WE PUT ONE BLANKET ON THE PAPER MATTRESS, AND THREE ON TOP OF US. THIS SOMEWHAT HELPED WITH THE HEAT, BUT THE "RAINS" STILL CAME FROM THE CEILLING.

WE WENT TO WORK VERY EARLY EVERY DAY, ENJOYING THE STAR-FILLED SKY. AS WE MARCHED WE HAD TO SING, WHICH WAS AT TIMES QUITE

A FEAT UPGRADE AND IN A STARVED CONDITION. WHAT HELPED OUR MORALES THAT WE SAW OTHER WORKERS IN THE FACTORY, AND THERE WERE SOME RUMORS COMING FROM THEM SOMEHOW, EVEN THOUGH WE WERE NOT ALLOWED TO TALK. THE GUARDS WITH THEIR GUNS WERE ALWAYS JUST A FEW FEET AWAY WATCHING.

WE HAD A SURPRISE IN MARCH. THE SIRENS WENT ON UNEXPECTEDLY. IT HAPPENED FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND EVERYONE RAN FOR THE SHELTERS. EVERY ONE EXCEPT US. WE WERE NOT INSTRUCTED TO DO ABOUT A SITUATION LIKE THIS AND THE GUARDS ABANDONED US RUNNING ON THE DOUBLE FOR THE SHELTERS.

WE KEPT ON WORKING AS BEFORE BUT IN MUCH BETTER SPIRIT. WE WORKED TALKED AND SMILED. THAT IS HOW OUR GUARDS FOUND US, SMILING, WHEN THEY CAME BACK. THEY WERE SURPRISED, THAT THEY DID NOT FIND US SCARED, BUT WHEN THE NEXT BOMBING CAME THEY MARCHED US DOWN INTO THE SHELTER AND INTO ONE ROOM. WHILE THEY LOOKED VERY WORRIED WHEN THE NOISE OF BLAST HIT CLOSE, WE JUST LAY DOWN THE CONCRETE FLOOR AND WENT TO SLEEP IN NO TIME.

AT THE END OF THE BOMBING THEY WOKE US UP AND WE WENT BACK TO WORK. WE DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH SLEEP EVER. THE NIGHTS WERE SHORT FOR US AND WE DID NOT HAVE REPLENISHING FOOD TO RECOVER, SO THIS INTERRUPTION CAME HANDY FOR US.

ON SOME SATURDAYS WE MARCHED HOME EARLY, SO THE GUARDS COULD HAVE SOME TIME OFF. THIS SATURDAY WAS AN EXTRA TREAT FOR US TOO. THE SNOW SPARKLED EVERYWHERE ALL AROUND THE MOUNTAINS AS THE SUN STILL BATHED THE PEAKS. ALL OF A SUDDEN WE HEARD A PLANE OVER HEAD. WE WERE ON A FOOTPATH. NOT FAR FROM US THERE WAS A DROP OF THE MOUNTAIN SIDE, WITH AN OVERHANG. THE GUARDS RAN FOR THE SHELTER OF IT. WE WERE JUST STANDING THERE "AS DONKY ON A MOUNTAIN" AS THE HUNGARIAN SAYING GOES. WE WERE LOOKING UP AT THE PLANE SMILING FOR IT WAS NOT A GERMAN PLANE. IT WAS JUST OVERHEAD OBSERVING US. THEY COULD SEE THE PRISONER'S STRIPED JACKETS WE GOT IN THE MEANTIME FROM THE FACTORY, AND THEY DID NOT SHOOT AT US.

THE GUARDS CAME BACK WITH BLANK EXPRESSIONS ON THEIR FACES. BUT THEY DID NOT FOOL US. THEY COVERED UP THEIR ADMIRATION FOR US WITH IT, FOR STANDING AND SMILING AT A PLANE THAT COULD HAVE FINISHED US ALL WITH A ROUND. BUT IN DEED WE HAD NO FEAR. THERE WAS NOTHING TO LOOSE. WE WERE SKIN AND BONE.

I DID HAVE FEAR ONE TIME THOUGH. ONE PERSON DIED IN THE CAMP FROM A BLOCKAGE IN HER INTESTINES. I WAS TOLD IT HAPPENED , SINCE SHE HAD NO BOWEL MOVEMENT. I GOT SCARED WHEN I LEARNED THIS. I COULD NOT REMEMBER THE TIME I HAD ONE THE LAST TIME.

IT SO HAPPENED THAT FOR THE NEXT SUNDAY MY GROUP WAS NOT

SCEDULED TO GO TO THE FACTORY. SATURDAY EVENING I WENT TO THE CAMP-DOCTOR AND ASKED HER FOR A LAXATIVE. SHE GAVE ME ONE AND I TOOK IT RIGHT THERE IN THE OFFICE.

NEXT MORNING WE MARCHED OFF TO WORK. ON THE WAY HOME I HAD TO GO IN THE BATHROOM. I HAD A TERRIBLE FEAR I NEVER EXPERIENCED IN MY LIFE, : THAT I WILL GO IN MY PANTS. SURELY I COULD NOT JUMP OUT OF THE LINE TO GO BEHIND A BUSH. THE DOGS WOULD HAVE TORN ME APART. WITH ALL MY PRAYERS AND WILLPOWER AND MUSCLE CONTROL I WAS KEEPING IT INSIDE UNTIL WE ARRIVED TO CAMP. BUT I HAD TO STAND IN LINE OF FIVES UNTIL MY NUMBER WAS CALLED AND OF ALL OF OURS.. BECAUSE IF I LEAVE I WILL BE PUNISHED. BUT I HAD TO GO IN THE OUT-HOUSE OR GO IN MY PANTS.

I JUMPED OUT THE DOOR, RAN TO THE outhouse AND "WENT OUT" PURE WATER. THERE WAS NOTHING IN ME BUT THE BODY FLUIDS. RAN BACK TROUGH THE DOOR.

THE AUFSEHERIN WAS STANDING THERE WAITING FOR ME.

I MUST HAVE LOOKED VERY SICK FROM FEAR.

SHE LOOKED AT ME AND LET ME BACK IN MY LINE WITHOUT SAYING ANYTHING. EVEN WRITING THIS DOWN I GET GOOSE PIMPLES.....THE FEAR!!!!!!

THE PAPER FACTORY WHERE WE LIVED WAS IN A BEAUTIFUL SETTING. WE DID NOT PAY MUCH ATTENTION TO THE DOUBLE BARBED WIRE THAT WENT AROUND THE GROUNDS. WE ENJOYED WHAT WAS ENJOYABLE, LIKE THE SWANS GLIDING ON THE BROOK WHEN THE ICE MELTED. THIS WATER WAS NEXT TO OUR FENCE, AND THE NEIGHBORS VEGETABLE GARDEN. I COULD SEE FROM THE UPPER BUNK THAT THE CABBAGE WAS NOT HARVESTED YET, IT MUST HAVE BEEN FROZEN. I COULD ALSO SEE THE SURROUNDING BEAUTY OF THE TYROL WHERE WE WERE PRISONERS.

IN THE MEANTIME AT THE FACTORY THE POLITICAL PRISONERS BECAME BOLDER. WHEN WE WERE LINED UP ONE EVENING TO BE COUNTED AND GO "HOME", I NOTICED A VERY GOOD LOOKING YOUNG MAN LOOKING AT ME INTENSELY FROM BEHIND THE GUARD. WHEN I LOOKED INTO HIS EYES HE TAPPED HIS POCKET, INDICATING WITH HIS EYES ALSO THAT THERE IS SOMETHING IN MY POCKET.

WHEN THE GUARD TURNED AWAY I CHECKED IT AND THERE WAS A A HALF SLICE OF BREAD IN A WRAP THERE. I WAS STUNNED, THAT THIS NICE TALL DARK HAired MAN SINGLED ME OUT FOR THIS BEAUTIFUL GESTURE OF SHARING HIS RATION, HIS SLICE OF BREAD WITH ME. STARTING THAT DAY HE KEPT ON PUTTING SOMETHING IN MY POCKET, THAT WAS HANGING ON THE DOORKNOB NEAR ME. AND I WAS NEVER ABLE TO THANK HIM WITH MORE THAN A GRATEFUL LOOK. TALKING WAS "VERBOTEN".

I FOUND MYSELF REVITALIZED JUST FROM THE IDEA THAT SOMEONE CARES.

UNFORTUNATELY HE WAS TRANSFERRED TO AN OTHER CAMP BEFORE LIBERATION, AND NOT KNOWING WHERE, I COULD NOT TELL HIM ABOUT THE BEAUTIFUL FEELINGS THAT HIS UNSELFISH ACTS GAVE ME.

IT WAS EARLY MAY. THE WEATHER TURNED MILD. THE SWANS WERE OUT AGAIN GLIDING UP AND DOWN THE THAWED RIVULET.

THERE WAS AN EXCITEMENT THAT DAY IN THE FACTORY AMONG THE GIRLS. THE GUARDS DID NOT PAY TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO US, AND A WOMAN GUARD WHILE TURNING AROUND IN HASTE, ACCIDENTALLY DISPLAYED A FLOWERY DRESS UNDER HER SOLDIER'S CAPE.

SEEING THIS I COULD HARDLY HIDE MY JOY, BUT I HAD TO KEEP IT INSIDE, I WAS NOT ALLOWED TO TALK TO ANYONE.

IN THE AFTERNOON A POLITICAL PRISONER PASSING ME, WHILE THE GUARD DID NOT PAY ATTENTION SAID TO ME "IN TWO DAYS WE WILL BE FREE".

AN HOUR LATER HE CAME BACK AGAIN, LOOKING FOR OPPORTUNITY TO SAY "JUST ONE MORE DAY". WHEN HE CAME BACK AN HOUR LATER,

!!!!!!! THE GUARDS WERE GONE, AND HE SAID "IT IS TODAY,
IT IS NOW!!!!!!".

MOST OF OUR GUARDS DISAPPEARED, BUT THE MACHINES WERE STILL RUNNING, AND WE DID NOT KNOW WHAT ELSE TO DO, SO WE WORKED THROUGH THE SHIFT. AT THE END OF THE WORKDAY, TWO GUARDS ESCORTED US "HOME".

ON THIS WAY HOME THE GUARDS DID NOT REQUIRE US TO SING BUT NEVER WAS THERE SUCH SPIRITED SINGING BEFORE AS WE STARVED OUT GIRLS MARCHED HOME FOR THE LAST TIME ON THIS BEAUTIFUL TYROLIAN ROAD UNDER THE STARS.

WHEN WE ARRIVED AT CAMP, WE DISCOVERED THAT OUR GUARDS AT THE ENTRANCE DOOR WERE CHANGED TO " ROOSTER FEATHERED POLICE" THE ILL FAMED SECTION OF THE HUNGARIAN POLICE. WE DID NOT KNOW HOW TO TAKE THIS. THEY HAD THE SAME REPUTATION AS THE SS.

OUR EVENING FOOD ARRIVED WITH A SECRET MESSAGE:"IT IS POISONED, DONT EAT IT". SOMEONE BETRAYED THE GERMANS WHO WANTED TO POISON US LIKE OTHER CAMPS WERE, AS WE LEARNED LATER. WE DID NOT DARE TO EAT THE FOOD AND WENT TO SLEEP ON EVEN HUNGRIER STOMACHS.....

THERE WAS A FREAK SNOWSTORM AT NIGHT, BUT BY LATE MORNING WARM WIND BLEW AWAY THE CLOUDS. THE SKIES WERE DEEP BLUE AND THE MOUNTAINS SPARKLED ALL AROUND US. ICICLES HUNG FROM THE ROOF LIKE SHORT CURTAINS, THAT HAD THEIR OWN LIFE, DRIPPING SLOWLY AND EACH MELTING A ROUND HOLE IN THE SNOW BELOW.

THE GUARDS WERE GONE FROM BETWEEN THE FENCE, ONLY THE ROOSTER FEATHERED GUARDS STILL STOOD AT THE DOOR. THEY WERE AMAZED (I GUESS) THAT WE WERE ALIVE. BUT THEY DID NOT

DARE TO SHOOT US, THEIR ENEMY WAS TOO CLOSE FOR COMFORT, THEY COULD ARRIVE ANY MINUTE AND BE CAUGHT IN THE ACT.

NOT BECAUSE THEY DID NOT WANT US DEAD!!!!!!!

I WAS STARVED FOR SUNSHINE, AND TAKING OFF MY CLOTHES I WALKED OUT IN MY FLANNEL UNDERWEAR TO EXPOSE MY BODY (WHAT IS LEFT OF IT) TO THE WARMTH OF THE SUN. THE SNOW REFLECTED THE SUN AND IT WAS COMFORTABLY WARM TO STAY UOTSIDE FOR SOME TIME. WALKING IN THE LIGHT, FRESH SNOW, LOOKING AROUND THE SNOWPEAKED MOUNTAINS FELT LIKE FREEDOM COMING FROM ALL THE SIDES.

I DID NOT EVEN FEEL HUNGER ANYMORE.

WHAT I FELT WAS THAT THIS DAY WAS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT DAYS IN MY LIFE.

I HEARD SOME NOISE FROM INSIDE, AND ON GOING BACK IN THE ROOM, I FOUND TWO AMERICAN SOLDIERS STANDING ON THE TABLE AND SPEAKING YIDDISH. I UNDERSTOOD SOME OF IT. IT SOUNDED LIKE GERMAN IN A WAY. ONE OF THEM WERE SAYING THAT WE WERE FREE, BUT NO ONE SHOULD GO OUTSIDE, FOR THE AUSTRIANS ARE SHOOTING NOW THE GERMANS WHO COULD NOT FLEE IN TIME. INDEED THE NOISE OF SHOTS COULD BE HEARD AT INTERVALS. THE SPEAKER SAID THAT FOOD WILL BE DELIVERERED AND BEGGED EVERYONE FOR A LITTLE MORE PATIENCE.

BUT PEOPLE DID NOT LISTEN, THEY WERE VERY HUNGRY AND SOME OF THEM, IRENE AT THE LEAD, WENT OUT FROM THE CAMP AND BEGGED THE AUSTRIANS FOR FOOD. ONE OF THE NEIGHBORS GAVE IRENE BEANS "GEMÜSE". SHE BECAME DEADLY SICK FROM IT. BEANS WAS EXACTLY SHE DID NOT NEED FOR HER STARVED INSIDES. I WAS WAITING FOR THE FOOD TO BE DELIVERED TO CAMP. BACON , BREAD, AND MILK CAME AND I TOOK SOME SIPS FROM THE MILK SLOWLY, MY FAVORITE DRINK, ENJOYING EVERY DROP. I BEGGED IRENE NOT TO EAT THE BACON, BUT SHE HAD TO EAT, AND BECAME SICK ALL OVER.

ARMY PHOTOGRAPHERS CAME IN THE CAMP TO DOCUMENT THEIR FINDS, AND WE WERE TOLD THAT OURS WAS THE FIRST CAMP THEY FOUND ALIVE. ALL OTHERS WERE STARVED TO DEATH , OR POISONED.

IN JUST A FEW DAYS MOST OF US GOT VERY SICK FROM EATING, JUST PLAIN EATING. SLOWLY IT WAS REALIZED THAT STARVED OUT PEOPLE CANNOT EAT LIKE THOSE WHO HAD FOOD BEFORE. THEY WILL HAVE TO BE FED WITH FOOD , LIKE BABY FOOD SO OUR DIGESTIVE SYSTEM CAN RELEARN HOW TO DIGEST. AND WHEN THAT KIND OF FOOD WAS GIVEN TO US, HALF DEAD GIRLS, WE, STARTED ON OUR WAY OF RECOVERY, AND TO LOOK MORE LIKE HUMANS, THAN SKELETONS.

IN A FEW DAYS THE WHOLE CAMP WAS PACKED UP ON HALF TRUCKS AND TRANSPORTED TO A " HITLER JUGEND SUMMER CAMP" NEAR SCHÖRFLING.

THE SETTING WAS INCREDIBLY BEAUTIFUL. THE CAMP ITSELF WAS LOCATED ON THE HILLSIDE WHICH OVERLOOKED A LARGE LAKE THAT WAS SET CLOSE BY. THE MOUNTAINS TOPS WERE STILL IN FROSTED SPLENDOR. ON THE LAKE THERE WERE ROWING BOATS AND A YACHT CRUISING THE WATERS WITH RECUPERATING ALLIED SOLDIERS FROM A NEARBY HOSPITAL.

THE WARM SUN BROUGHT THE FLOWERS ^{out} ON THE SLOPES AND THE TREES LOOKED AS IF THEY PUT ON THEIR HOLIDAY CLOTHES OF YOUNG LEAVES. IT WAS A VERY RELAXING ATMOSPHERE WITH THE AMERICAN SOLDIERS PRESENT.

I WAS THIRTY SIX KG., MY USUAL WEIGHT WHEN I WAS "PRETTY" WAS FIFTY FIVE POUNDS MORE. THE DRIED OUT SKIN RATTLED ON MY BONE, AND AFTER EXAMINING MY TEETH IN A SMALL MIRROR I FOUND SEVEN SMALL CAVITIES THAT I DID NOT HAVE BEFORE. BEING AT A GROWING AGE AND NOT HAVING ANY FOOD WITH CALCIUM HAD ITS CONSEQUENCES. SITTING WAS VERY DIFFICULT FOR ME WITHOUT ANY " PADDING" ON THE HIPBONES. I LAID DOWN INSTEAD OF SITTING.

LEARNING FROM THE MISTAKE OF OTHERS , I ATE VERY LIGHTLY, SO I WOULD NOT GET SICK FROM EATING. I PUT ON WEIGHT GRADUALLY EVERY DAY A LITTLE, AND I SPENT MOST OF MY TIME AT THE FENCED IN PRIVATE BEACH THAT WAS RESERVED FOR US AT THE LAKESIDE, AND WAS OFF LIMITS TO OTHERS. I LAY THERE ON A TOWEL ON TOP OF THE SOFT GRASS RELAXING,

MY THOUGHTS WERE FAR AWAY IN HUNGARY, WONDERING IF THE FAMILY, SOME AT LEAST, WENT BACK TO OUR OLD HOME ALREADY. WHEN I WILL HAVE THE STRENGTH TO TRAVEL I WILL HAVE TO GO "HOME" TO THE FAMILY, I THOUGHT. EVEN THOUGH MY MOTHER TOLD ME IN THE CATTLE WAGON ON THE WAY TO AUSCHWITZ NOT TO EVER GO BACK TO HUNGARY. WAIT FOR THE WORLD TO RETURN TO NORMAL, ADVERTISE IN INTERNATIONAL PAPERS, AND FIND EACH OTHER THAT WAY.

I DID NOT THINK I COULD WAIT THAT LONG. MY MOTHER DID NOT TELL THE SAME THING TO MY TWO BROTHERS. THEY LEFT THE CITY BEFORE WE DID.

I HOPED THEY MUST HAVE GONE HOME ALREADY, SINCE THE PLACE THEY WERE IN WAS LIBERATED BY THE RUSSIAN ARMY LONG BEFORE WE WERE.

GETTING WELL WAS TAKING A LONG TIME, BUT SINCE THE DAY OF LIBERATION WHEN OUR SILENCE ENDED (AT THE WORKPLACE, IN CAMP WE WERE TOO SLEEPY TO TALK MUCH) EVERYBODY HAD A PAST THEY WANTED TO TALK ABOUT. AND ALL OF A SUDDEN WE HAD A FUTURE!!!!!! WITH GREAT HOPES AND EXPECTATIONS.

NO ONE EXPECTED THAT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED WAS, THAT THIS GROUP, THIS CAMP, BEING A YOUNG GROUP, WE COULD SURVIVE, AND THAT PROBABLY WE WERE THE ONLY SURVIVORS OF OUR FAMILIES. WE DID NOT EVEN THINK OF THIS POSSIBILITY. WE DID NOT KNOW YET WHAT WAS

HAPPENING IN CONCENTRATION CAMPS AND TO WHAT EXTENT.

WE WENT ON PICNICS IN THE WOODS BEHIND THE BUILDINGS. EXCURSIONS WERE ORGANIZED TO OTHER LIBERATED CAMPS, WE WERE TAKEN ON ARMY TRUCKS. I WENT ALONG THE FIRST TIME TO A MEN'S CAMP TO EBENSEE. IT DEVASTATED ME ENTIRELY. THE MEN WERE EVEN MORE UNRECOGNIZABLE AS PEOPLE. IF POSSIBLE TO BE STARVED TO LESS THEN BONE AND SKIN, THEY WERE. EVEN IF I WOULD HAVE MET A RELATIVE, I WOULD NOT HAVE RECOGNIZED HIM. BUT ONE OF THE SKELETON OF A MAN RECOGNIZED HIS WIFE IN OUR GROUP, AND IT JUST BROKE EVERYONES HEART TO SEE THAT THE WIFE COULD NOT BELIEVE THAT THE WALKING SKELETON WHO LOOKED, AS IF HE WAS GOING TO DROP DEAD ANY MINUTE, WAS HER HUSBAND.

HE CALLED HER BY HIS ENDEARING WORD FOR HER AND SHE WAS A HAPPY WOMAN TO FIND HIM ALIVE. HE WAS AN MD. BEFORE THE WAR AND SHE WAS A NURSE. SHE STAYED WITH HIM AND NURSED HIM BACK TO HEALTH.

THIS WAS A MIRACLE. WITHOUT HER CARE I DOUBT HE WOULD HAVE SURVIVED, HE CERTAINLY DID NOT LOOK AS IF HE COULD.

I WENT BACK ON THE TRUCK TO MY CAMP, AFTER READING THE LIST OF THE LIVING PERSONS IN EBENSEE AND NOT FINDING ANY NAMES THAT WERE FAMILIAR TO ME, I DECIDED NOT TO GO AGAIN ON ANY SUCH TRIP.

LISTS OF SURVIVORS STARTED TO APPEAR AT THE CAMP'S OFFICE AND I STILL COULD NOT FIND ANY ONE'S NAME THAT I KNEW.

I DECIDED TO CONCENTRATE ONLY ON GETTING WELL, ON MY WELLBEING. JUST EATING AND RESTING, SINCE THERE WAS NO ENERGY FOR ANYTHING ELSE. I WANTED TO PUT ON ENOUGH WEIGHT SO I COULD SIT WITHOUT PAIN. IT TOOK A LOT OF TIME TO HAVE ENOUGH ENERGY TO TAKE EVEN A SHORT SWIM IN THE LAKE.

IRENE WORRIED ME A LOT. SHE GOT SICK ON THE WAY TO EBENSEE, SHE HAD A TEMPERATURE. SHE SPENT A WEEK IN BED. LUCKILY SHE NEVER LOST HER RAVISHING APPETITE AND IT SEEMED TO HELP HER GET BETTER.

SIX WEEKS AFTER LIBERATION THERE WAS A TRANSPORT TO HUNGARY. I THOUGHT I WAS STRONG ENOUGH TO GO AND LOOK FOR RELATIVES IN HUNGARY. I WAS STILL THIN, AND WANTING TO LOOK BETTER. I MADE UP A RUFFLE AND PUT IT AROUND MY WAIST UNDER THE SKIRT TO LOOK AS IF I HAD HIPS.

THE TRIP HOME WAS A BIG MISTAKE. IF I HAD ANY HOPES BEFORE THEY WERE LOST ON ARRIVING. ONLY TWO COUSINS WERE THERE FROM THE JEWISH SIDE OF THE FAMILY, AND AN UNCLE, BUT HE WAS NOT JEWISH OR DID NOT COUNT TO BE ONE.

WHEN UNCLE IMRE MARRIED A NON JEWISH GIRL, HE HAD TO PROMISE THAT THE CHILDREN TO BE BORN WILL FOLLOW THE WIFE'S RELIGION. THEY WERE VERY MUCH IN LOVE AND MY UNCLE CONSENTED. THIS MARRIAGE MADE BOTH THE BRIDE'S AND OUR FAMILY VERY UNHAPPY.

VILMA'S FAMILY CLOSED HER OUT, THEY NEVER WANTED TO SEE HER AGAIN. IMRE'S FAMILY PRETENDED TO BE ANGRY, AND THE FAMILY MEMBERS

KEPT IN TOUCH SECRETLY IN FRONT OF THE OTHERS.

THERE WAS AN OCCURANCE THAT UPSET THE FAMILY.

MY GRANDFATHER, IMRE'S FATHER VISITED IMRE AND VILMA AT XMAS. HE FOUND HER CRYING BECAUSE IT WAS THE FIRST XMAS HER FAMILY DID NOT WANT HER. MY GRANDFATHER WENT AND BOUGHT HER A SEALSKIN COAT TO MAKE HER HAPPY. THIS DID NOT SIT WELL WITH THE JEWISH DAUGHTERS-IN-LAW, SINCE THEY DID NOT GET ANY.

BUT IT DID NOT TAKE LONG THAT THE FAMILY WAS FRIENDLY AGAIN OPENLY, BECAUSE MY UNCLE IMRE WAS THE FAVORITE OF EVERYONE.

BECAUSE OF VILMA I LOST SOME TREASURES, BUT I HAVE SOME CHILDHOOD PHOTOS. AND SOME OF THEM CAME FROM THE GHETTO DUMP AS I SAID BEFORE.

WHEN I WENT SHOPPING ON MAIN STREET AFTER MY RETURN, I MET A WOMAN WHO WAS WEARING A BLOUSE THAT WAS MY MOMS. NO, NO MISTAKE, IT WAS CUSTOM MADE. I FROZE. WHEN THE WOMAN GOT CLOSER TO ME I WAS STILL STANDING, I JUST LOOKED AT HER, BUT DID NOT SAY A WORD.

JUST A FEW DAYS LATER I MET ANOTHER WOMAN WEARING THE PAIR OF SHOES THAT WAS TO BE MY SEVENTEENTH BIRTHDAY PRESENT FROM MY MOM.

MY MOTHER SACRIFICED HER BEAUTIFUL NAVY POCKETBOOK (NO LEATHER COULD BE BOUGHT AT THAT TIME) SO I COULD HAVE MY FIRST PAIR OF SHOES THAT HAD ELEVATED HEELS OF CORKWOOD, THAT WAS IN

FASHION. SHE ORDERED THOSE SHOES SECRETLY AFTER I COMPLIMENTED THE SHOES THAT ONE OF HER LADY FRIENDS WAS WEARING. MY MOM MADE ME TRY THEM ON. THEY FIT PERFECTLY. SHE ORDERED THEM MUCH BEFORE MY BIRTHDAY TO MAKE SURE, THEY WILL BE READY IN TIME. SHE EVEN PAID FOR THEM IN ADVANCE.

NOT MUCH LATER WE WERE LOCKED UP IN THE GHETTO.

THE SHOEMAKER WAS ONE EXCEPTIONAL PERSON. HE CAME TO THE GATE OF THE GHETTO TO DELIVER THE SHOES.

BY THEN THERE WAS A LAW IN EFFECT, THAT IF ONE OWED MONEY TO A JEW IT DID NOT HAVE TO BE PAID BACK, AND THIS PERSON GAVE ME MORE THEN THOSE LOVELY PAIR OF SHOES. HE GAVE ME A FEELING THAT THERE WERE PEOPLE WHO CARED, AND ALL WAS NOT LOST.

WHEN WE WERE SEARCHED BEFORE LEAVING THE GHETTO IT WAS TAKEN OUT OF MY RUCKSACK WITH OTHER THINGS AND WAS LEFT FOR WHOEVER TOOK ALL OUR BELONGINGS, AND NOW THIS PERSON WAS WALKING IN THEM.

THESE LITTLE THINGS CONVINCED ME THAT THE EMOTIONAL BURDEN WAS TOO GREAT TO COPE WITH IN CSONGRAD. THE MEMORIES WERE ALSO OVERPOWERING.

I WAS READY TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY.

FIRST I WROTE A LETTER TO THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN MY MOTHER'S TOWN, SZEKESFEHERVAR., WHERE OUR RELATIVES LIVED BEFORE THE WAR.

I INQUIRED IF ANYONE FROM MY MOTHERS' FAMILY WAS ALIVE.

I GOT A LETTER FROM MY COUSIN ZSUZSI AND MACA TO WHOM THE
THE LETTER WAS PASSED ON, ASKING ME TO COME RIGHT AWAY. THERE
WERE NO QUESTIONS IN THE LETTER ABOUT ME AND MY FAMILY. AFTER THEY
LOOKED AROUND IN THEIR OWN CITY THEY MUST HAVE KNOWN THE PICTURE
OVER ALL.

THERE WAS NO WAY FOR ME TO TRAVEL LEGALLY, SO I COULD NOT
PURCHASE A TRAIN TICKET. THAT DID NOT KEEP ME BACK FROM GOING TO
MY LIVING RELATIVES. IT WAS NIGHT, AND I WENT UP TO THE ROOF OF THE
TRAIN. THE DESIRE TO SEE THEM ALIVE WAS OVERPOWERING. WE WERE VERY
HAPPY TO SEE EACH OTHER, BUT THERE WAS MORE CRYING THAN SMILING.

THE MISSING FAMILY ALL AROUND LEFT THEIR SPACE EMPTY. ...

ZSUZSI AND MACA WERE THE SURVIVORS OF THE WHOLE MARON FAMILY.
THEY SURVIVED BECAUSE THEY WERE SHIPPED OUT EARLY FROM AUSCHWITZ TO
A FACTORY WHERE THEY WORKED UNTIL LIBERATION.

EVENTUALLY THEY ALSO ESCAPED FROM HUNGARY AT THE TIME OF
REVOLUTION IN FIFTY SEVEN. BY THAT TIME ZSUZSI AND HER HUSBAND ZOLTAN
SPITZER HAD TWO LOVELY DAUGHTERS, MARIKA AND EVA.

THEY WERE FED UP WITH THE COMMUNIST REGIME BY THEN.

WE LIVED IN WILMINGTON DEL. AND THEY CAME THERE. I FELT
VERY LONELY BEFORE THEY CAME, NOT HAVING ANY OF MY FAMILY TO SHARE
THE JOY WITH ME THAT I HAD WITH MY CHILDREN, THEIR ARRIVAL WAS A

BLESSING FOR ME, WE WERE VERY CLOSE KNIT AND WE MET SEVERAL TIMES A WEEK. IN THE MEANTIME MACA MARRIED HER CHILDHOOD SWEETHEART LACI, NOW ELIEZER STERN. WHEN THEY EMIGRATED TO ISRAEL, MACA BECAME MIRIAM.

AFTER SPENDING TIME WITH MY COUSINS I DECIDED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY AS SOON AS I CAN. IT WAS NOT LEGAL AT THE TIME. AND MANY PEOPLE LEFT THE COUNTRY ILLEGALLY. IT WAS VERY SCARY FOR ME TO CROSS TO AUSTRIA, BUT THERE WAS AN EVEN SCARIER ILLEGAL CROSSING FOR ME SIX MONTHS LATER, WHEN I WAS ALREADY IN POCKING , GERMANY, IN A DISPLACED PERSONS CAMP. A NEWCOMER TOLD ME THATBEFORE HE LEFT HUNGARY, HE HEARD ON THE RADIO THAT PETER SUGAR ARRIVED HOME AFTER LONG SICKNESS RESULTING FROM CAMP.

THIS WAS THE FIRST WORD ABOUT MY IMMEDIATE FAMILY. I RAN TO THE CAMP OFFICE AND ASKED FOR PAPERS TO GO TO HUNGARY. THAT WAS EASY, BUT THERE WERE NO PAPERS TO BE HAD TO COME BACK AGAIN.

NO MATTER WHAT, I HAD TO GO AFTER MY BROTHER.

IN JUST ONE WEEK IRENE AND I WERE ON OUR WAY TO HUNGARY.

WHEN WE ARRIVED IT TURNED OUT, THAT THIS PETER SUGAR WAS NOT MY BROTHER AND IT DEVASTATED ME.

HOW MANY TIMES CAN ONE LOSE A LOVED RELATIVE????????????

WHILE IN HUNGARY I LEARNED THAT MY AUNT ELIZABET IS ALIVE IN TRANSYLVANIA.. I HAD TO SEE HER. IRENE WAS ORIGINALLY FROM THERE. SHE HAD PASSPORT WITHOUT A PHOTO. I TOOK THE TRAIN IN BUDAPEST AS A REPATRIATING IRENE. ONLY HERE TOO, THERE WAS NO WAY OF GETTING OUT FROM THERE LEGALLY. I WAS STAYING WITH MY AUNT FOR THREE DAYS, PROMISING HER THAT WHEN I GOT SETTLED IN ISRAEL I WILL SEND HER A PLANE TICKET TO VISIT ME. IT CAME ABOUT TWENTY YEARS LATER IN THE USA.

MY TRIP BACK TO HUNGARY FROM TRANSYLVANIA WAS THE SCARIEST TRIP OF MY LIFETIME. I HAD TO BUY THE SERVICE OF A BORDER PATROL.

WHEN I GAVE HIM THE MONEY FOR GUIDING ME TO THE BORDER, HE WENT AND GOT HIMSELF DRUNK. I WAS TERRIBLY SCARED OF HIM. I WAS DRESSED IN A BLUE MAN'S OVERALL TO MAKE ME MORE LOOK LIKE A BOY, A WORKER. HE HAD QUESTIONS ABOUT MY EXPERIENCES WITH MEN, AND I TOLD HIM REPEATEDLY ABOUT MY UNCLE WHO WAS A VERY HIGH RANKING OFFICER IN THE "BORDER FINACE SOMETHING". SO IT GAVE HIM AN IDEA HE SHOULD BEHAVE.

AFTER A VERY LONG WALK HE STOPPED WITH ME AND SAID "THIS IS THE BORDER AND I CANNOT ESCORT YOU ANY FURTHER". IF I COULD HAVE AFFORDED IT, I WOULD HAVE BECOME HYSTERICAL.

IT WAS SO INK DARK, INDIA INK, AND HE TOLD ME TO GO IN THE

DIRECTION OF THE CHURCH TOWER!!!!!! MY GOD!!!!!! WHAT CHURCH TOWER??????

ONLY STARS COULD BE SEEN. IT WAS MIDNIGHT. I ASKED HIM TO COME WITH ME, UNTIL I CAN ACTUALLY CAN SEE THE TOWER. HE SAID HE COULD NOT COME ONE STEP OVER THE BORDER, AND WE WERE RIGHT ON IT.

IT WAS BEYOND ME HOW COULD HE TELL WHEN NOTHING COULD BE SEEN? BUT ONE DOES NOT ARGUE WITH A DRUNK WHO HAS A MACHINE GUN OR WHAT EVER ON ~~THE~~ HIS SIDE , PROBABLY LOADED.

I STARTED TO GO IN THE DIRECTION HE FACED ME TO GO. AFTER A FEW STEPS I COLLIDED WITH A BUSH. I HAD TO STIFFLE A SCREAM. I THOUGHT I WALKED INTO A PATROL ON THE HUNGARIAN SIDE. I TOOK A FEW MORE STEPS, NOT KNOWING IF IT WAS STILL IN THE DIRECTION FACED TO GO, THE DIRECTION OF THE CHURCH TOWER. I WALKED AGAIN INTO A BUSH AND DECIDED NOT TO GO ONE MORE STEP, UNTIL SOME LIGHT WILL SHOW ME WHERE. BUT THE DANGER WAS, WHEN IT WILL BE LIGHT, THE PATROL WILL SEE ME, IF ANY AROUND.

I SAT DOWN AND FELL ASLEEP. IT WAS NOT REALLY A SLEEP. I REMEMBER MY HEAD CONSTANTLY MOVING UP AND DOWN. UP LOOKING FOR LIGHT, DOWN FOR SLEEP, TRYING TO CATCH A FEW MINUTES OF REST.

FINALLY THERE WAS SOME FAINT LIGHT FROM THE EAST. I PRAYED IN GRATITUDE AND STARTED TO LOOK FOR THE TOWER. IT WAS ON MY LEFT. I TURNED IN THE DARK, FACING THE WRONG DIRECTION.

THERE WAS A NARROW USED DIRT ROAD I STARTED WALKING ON. IT WAS WHEAT HARVEST TIME, MIDDLE OF JULY AND I COULD SEE PEOPLE COMING IN MY DIRECTION ON THE ROAD, LOADED WITH SCYTHES AND SMALL SACKS OF FOOD, GOING TO HARVEST THE WHEAT THAT MOVED LIKE WAVES IN THE OCEAN. IT WAS A CRISP MORNING. I WAS NOT SURE WHAT WOULD I SAY IF ANYONE WOULD ASK ME A QUESTION. THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING " GOING FOR ME", I WAS NOT OF AGE YET AND SO MY PARENTS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR ME HAD THEY LIVED. BUT I WAS STILL SCARED. AND I HAD TO GO IN THE BATHROOM. IT WAS FROM SCARE.

FINALLY I ARRIVED AT THE VILLAGE, NO ONE HAVING ASKED ME ANYTHING. ONLY THE DOGS WERE FURIOUS WITH ME. IT WAS VERY EARLY MORNING. I SAW A GATE DOOR SLIGHTLY OPEN, WHERE THERE WAS NO DOG. I PUSHED IN THE DOOR, AND RIGHT THERE A FEW STEPS AWAY, THERE WAS AN outhouse. I RAN FOR IT. IN THE MEANTIME A MAN CAME OUT FROM THE HOUSE TO FEED THE CHICKENS. I OPENED THE DOOR TO FACE HIM. HE DID NOT SHOW ANY SURPRISE SEEING ME. I ASKED HIM WHERE CAN I GET A FEW DOLLARS CASHED IN THE VILLAGE FOR A TRAIN TICKET. HE TOLD ME WHERE TO GO. HE SENT ME TO THE HOUSE OF THE BORDER PATROL OFFICER. I KNOCKED ON THE DOOR, NOT KNOWING IT. A MAN CAME OUT IN UNIFORM. HE ASKED ME WHAT I WANTED. I, IN MY SCARE SAID "TO CASH DOLLAR" PEOPLE WENT TO JAIL FOR POSESSION OF DOLLAR...

HE SAID " FINE" AND GAVE ME CASH IN HUNGARIAN MONEY FOR THE TWENTY DOLLARS I HAD. (IT WAS ABOUT A MONTH SALARY OF A WELL PAID WORKER). HE DID NOT GIVE ME THE VALUE OF IT AND I DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH FOR A TRIP TO BUDAPEST, KNOWING THAT I CANNOT SAY A WORD. I WAS IN HIS HANDS. THESE WERE HAPPENING TO ME WITHIN A FEW HOURS. I DID NOT HAVE TIME TO RECOVER FROM ONE SCARE, WHEN THE NEXT CAME.

I GOT TO BUDAPEST ANYWAY, SO WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

ON MY FIRST TRIP TO HUNGARY I ALREADY KNEW THAT I WAS NOT GOING TO STAY THERE. MY HEARING LOSS BOTHERED ME A LOT. I DECIDED TO GO TO THE JEWISH HOSPITAL IN BUDAPEST TO SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE BEFORE I LEAVE THE COUNTRY. WHEN I CHECKED IN I WAS EXAMINED BY SEVERAL DOCTORS, X RAYS WERE TAKEN, AND AUDIOGRAMS, AND I WAS TOLD THAT THE CHIEF SURGEON WAS ON A TRIP TO VIENNA. HE ALSO WORKED THERE AT THE ROTCHILD (SPELLING?) HOSPITAL. WE HAD TO WAIT FOR HIM. BESIDES DR. FLEISCHMAN WE ALSO HAD TO WAIT FOR WARMER DAYS, SINCE THE HEATER WAS PUT ON ONLY FOR EMERGENCY OPERATIONS. THERE WAS NO COAL TO BE HAD. WHILE I WAS WAITING FOR THE SURGEON AND GOOD WEATHER, I WENT FOR WALKS ON THE HOSPITAL GROUNDS. AS I PULLED OUT A HAND KERCHIEF FROM MY COAT POCKET, WITHOUT MY KNOWLEDGE A DOCUMENT FELL OUT.

NEXT DAY A DOCTOR WAS LOOKING FOR ME. HE TOLD ME THAT HE FOUND A PAPER ON HIS WAY, AND WHEN HE LOOKED AT IT HE REALIZED THAT WE WERE IN THE SAME TRANSPORT, COMING TO HUNGARY FROM SCHORFLING AFTER THE LIBERATION..

THIS IS HOW IT HAPPENED: THE OFFICIALS WHO WERE IN CHARGE IN THE HITLER JUGEND CAMP WITH US, WERE ARRANGING OUR TRANSPORT TO HUNGARY. THEY DID NOT LIKE THE IDEA THAT WE THE GIRLS TRAVEL WITHOUT MEN. THE ONLY AMERICAN SOLDIER WOULD HAVE BEEN THE TRUCK DRIVER WITH US. THE RUSSIAN SOLDIERS HAD A BAD REPUTATION AT THE BORDERS WE HAD TO CROSS. THEY LOVED WOMEN.

IT WAS ARRANGED THAT THIRTY MEN WHO WERE ALSO LIBERATED NEARBY, ACCOMPANY US, FIVE TO A TRUCKLOAD OF GIRLS. THIS DOCTOR WAS ONE OF THEM. WHEN HE GOT MY PAPER FROM HIS POCKET HE ASKED ME: " DO YOU REMEMBER THE STORM , WHEN WE ARRIVED TO VIENERNEUSTADT?" I SAID " YES I DO, WE ALL RAN WHICH WE SHOULD NOT HAVE, BECAUSE OF THE CONSTANT LIGHTENING ". " YES YOU ALL RAN, BUT I COULD NOT EVEN WALK, SO I WAS LEFT ALONE THERE, LYING UNDER THE ONLY TREE ON THE SQUARE. NO ONE HELPED ME TO GET UNDER COVER. I WAS THINKING TO MYSELF THIS IS THE LAST HOUR OF YOUR LIFE, LYING UNDER A SINGLE TREE IN A THUNDERSTORM. THERE WAS NO ONE TO HELP ME".

"THE STORM WAS GONE AS FAST AS IT CAME, AND THANKS GOD WE ARE HERE, AND ALIVE" I SAID. " I COULD HAVE EASILY DIED THERE, GETTING HIT BY ONE OF THE LIGHTENING BOLTS" HE MUSED.

THEN HE GAVE ME THE DOCUMENT OF MY LIBERATION AND SAID "IF YOU GO WITH THIS PAPER TO THE BUILDING MARKED WITH A CAPITAL C AND SHOW THE WOMAN THIS PAPER SHE WILL GIVE YOU SOME POTATO CANDY". I WAS STARVED FOR SWEETS, SO I WENT.

IT WAS VERY COLD IN THE HOSPITAL. THIS WAS JUST AFTER THE WAR. I WAS STILL WAITING FOR THE SPECIALIST AND A BREAK IN THE WEATHER, WHEN I MET A WOMAN WALKING IN THE HALLWAY. SHE LOOKED VERY FAT. SHE LOOKED AT ME WITH INTENSITY. I DID NOT KNOW WHERE TO PUT HER . SHE LOOKED SOMEHOW FAMILIAR TO ME. SHE WAS WEARING A FUR COAT. I JUST COULD NOT PLACE HER. ALL OF A SUDDEN SHE BOLTED IN MY DIRECTION. SHE HUGGED ME, SHE KISSED ME, THEN SHE SAID "DONT YOU RECOGNIZE ME?"

I KNEW THE VOICE. IT WAS IRENE'S VOICE. THE COLLECTION OF OF BONES, MY GOD, LOOK AT HER NOW. IRENE THE SCELETON WAS WALKING WITH DIFFICULTIES, FROM BEING SO FAT!!!!!!! " MY GOD WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?" I ASKED HER. SHE CAME FOR TREATMENT TO CLEAN OUT THE SAME WOUND I USED TO PRAY OVER IN CAMP SHE SAID. SHE CAME TO BUDA-PEST S BEST PLACE AND TO THE SAME CLINIC I WAS STAYING AT. SHE ASKED

ME WHAT WAS I DOING THERE? " I AM WAITING FOR THE GOOD WEATHER TO HAVE AN OPERATION ". SHE QUICKLY SAID " NONSENSE, YOU ARE COMING WITH US TO ISRAEL". I TOLD HER THAT I ALREADY HAVE MY PAPERS TO GO THERE IN APRIL. THIS WAS FEBRUARY THE THIRD. IRENE EXPLAINED TO ME THAT IT WILL BE HARDER AND HARDER TO GET OUT A COMMUNIST COUNTRY, AND I KNEW SHE WAS RIGHT. ON THE OTHER HAND I HAD NO EXIT PAPER AT THAT TIME.

IRENE TOLD ME TO GO WITH THEM (HER BROTHER AND HIS GIRL FRIEND WERE ALSO IN BUDAPEST FOR THE SAME TRIP) TO A PLACE CALLED " ERZSEBET SCHOOL", WHERE THE PEOPLE WHO WILL LEAVE NEXT DAY GATHERED. IN CASE A GIRL DOES NOT SHOW UP FOR THE TRIP, I CAN GET HER PAPER AND USE IT. I WAS NOT AWARE THAT THE PAPER HAD A PICTURE OF THE OWNER ON IT.

SURE ENOUGH, WHEN THE PEOPLE WERE CALLED ONE BY ONE TO PICK UP THE DOCUMENT FROM THE GROUP LEADER, THERE WERE A FEW WHO CHICKENED OUT. IT WAS A RISKY OPERATION. IRENE NUDGED ME WITH HER ELBOW, WHEN A GIRL WAS CALLED AND NO ONE WENT FOR THE PAPER. BUT I WAS SCARED (AGAIN?) AND REFUSED TO GO.. IRENE LOOKED AT ME ANGRILY AND SAID TO THE LEADER, " THE GIRL JUST LEFT FOR THE BATHROOM, I WILL GIVE IT TO HER". SHE WENT TO PICK UP THE PAPER AND GAVE IT TO ME. I LOOKED AT THE PICTURE, AND STARTED TO SHAKE. I STILL DID NOT WANT

TO TAKE THE RISK OF TRAVELING WITH SOMEONE ELSE'S VISA. WHAT IF THEY DISCOVER IT AT THE BORDER? THE WHOLE GROUP MIGHT GET IN TROUBLE.

IRENE ASSURED ME THAT WHEN A GROUP GOES TOGETHER, THE OFFICERS DON'T LOOK AT EVERY PAPER. BUT I WAS STILL SCARED.

ON THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY IN FORTYSIX WE TOOK THE TRAIN IN BUDAPEST TO GO TO ISRAEL.

THE TRAIN THAT WAS HEADED FOR VIENNA WAS HALF FULL WITH JEWS TRAVELING WITH FALSE PASSPORTS AS SCHWABS ANYWAY. IT WAS A MOVEMENT WELL ORGANIZED, TO GET THE JEWS OUT OF THE SCENE OF THE SIX MILLION MURDERED ONES.

WHEN WE ARRIVED AT THE BORDER THE OFFICERS FROM AUSTRIA CAME TO INSPECT OUR PAPERS. ONE OF THEM TOOK THE PASSPORT OF THE NEXT PERSON SITTING AT THE DOOR, AND HOLDING IT IN HIS HAND, HE LOOKED AT US ONE BY ONE AND NOT AT THE PAPER. HE THEN HANDED IT BACK AND WENT INTO THE NEXT PULLMAN CUBICLE.

FINALLY I WAS NOT IN DANGER ANYMORE, AND MOST OF ALL NOT A MENACE TO THE GROUP. THEY WERE NOT EVEN AWARE OF THE DANGER.

ON THIS TRAIN "MATYI" MET AN OTHER SCHWAB THAT WAS I. HIS TRAVELING COMPANION "TIBI", ALSO MET IRENE. MATYI SPENT THE NIGHT TALKING ABOUT HIS SISTER ROZSIKA, AND TIBI TALKED TO IRENE, I DON'T KNOW WHAT.

ON ARRIVING TO VIENNA WE WERE HOUSED IN THE ROTSHIELD? (SP?) HOSPITAL. WE WERE ISSUED FOOD STAMPS, AND TICKETS TO LUXURIOUS PUBLIC BATH, WHICH WAS VERY CLOSE. IRENE AND I SPENT AN HOUR SOAKING OURSELVES IN THE WARM WATER. WHEN WE RETURNED TO THE HOSPITAL THE BOYS WERE WAITING FOR US WITH FOUR TICKETS TO THE OPERA, "LA BOHEME". THEY EXCHANGED FOUR CIGARETTES FOR EACH TICKET.

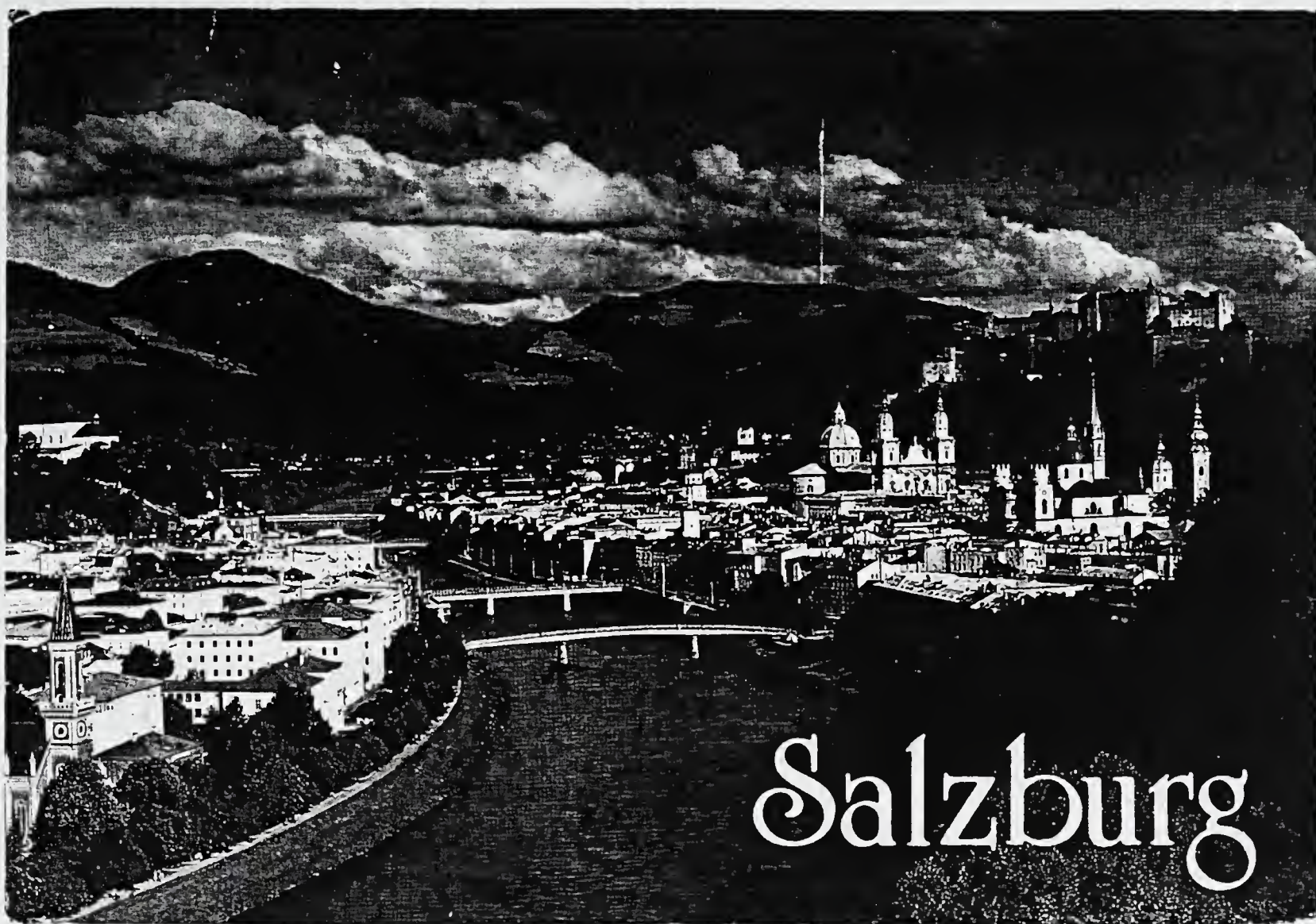
THE TICKETS WERE TWO BOX TICKETS AND TWO FOR AN OTHER PLACE. WE GOT THE BOX ONES AND ENJOYED OUR FIRST OPERA. I HEARD THIS ON RADIO BEFORE, BUT IT MADE A GREAT DIFFERENCE FOR A VILLAGE GIRL THAT I WAS, TO ACTUALLY BE IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS PLAYED.

THE BOYS CAME BACK NEXT DAY WITH TWO OTHER TICKETS, FOR THE "MADAME BUTTERFLY " AND WE WENT AGAIN, HAPPILY.

WE ALSO LEARNED IN VIENNA THAT IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO CONTINUE OURTRIP TO ISRAEL TROUGH ITALY. THE NUMBER OF WAITING JEWS TO DO JUST THAT OVERFLOWED THE REFUGEE CAMPS.

THE BRITISH WERE GUARDING THE SEAPORTS AS WELL AS WATCHING MOVEMENTS BY GROUPS ON DRY LAND. THEY WERE LOOKING FOR ILLEGAL TRANSPORTS TO ISRAEL. AFTER A WEEK STAY IN VIENNA WE WERE SHIPPED TO SALZBURG, AND IN AN OTHER WEEK TO POCKING, GERMANY.

WHEN IRENE AND I WAS PUT IN THE SAME TRANSPORT AGAIN, MATYI



Parliament in Budapest

AND TIBI WAS NOT INCLUDED IN THE SAME GROUP.

WHEN WE WERE ON THE WAY I TOLD IRENE THAT I WAS HAPPY THAT THE BOYS DID NOT MAKE IT, BECAUSE WHEN I SAW MATYI FOR THE FIRST TIME I HAD A FEELING OF FORBODING. I HAD A VOICE SAYING " HE IS YOUR HUSBAND ". I DID NOT WANT THAT.

IRENE WAS SURPRISED TO HEAR IT, BECAUSE MATYI WAS A VERY GOOD LOOKING, INTELLIGENT YOUNG MAN. IRENE ASKED ME "WHY DONT YOU LIKE HIM?" IT IS NOT THAT I DONT LIKE HIM BUT I DONT KNOW...IT IS A FEELING, A WARNING. AND I AM ATTRACTED TO HIM.....

" NOW YOU DONT HAVE TO WORRY ANYMORE, WE MIGHT NEVER SEE HIM AGAIN " IRENE TOLD ME. "THAT MIGHT BE TRUE" I SAID.

WHILE IN SALZBURG WE HAD TIME TO LOOK AT THE CITY AND THE SORROUNDING AREA. SALZBURG IS A TRULY BEAUTIFUL PLACE BUILT ON THE BANKS OF THE DANUBE, LIKE THAT OF BUDAPEST. THE MOUNTAINS AROUND HAVE A CERTAIN CHARM ABOUT THEM.

AFTER A WEEK STAY WE WERE ON THE WAY TO POCKING. IT WAS A CAMP WHERE ONE WAITED, FULL OF DISPLACED PERSONS.

THIRTY KILOMETERS WEST FROM THE DANUBE AND PASSAU, ON A WINDING TREE SHADED BEAUTIFUL ROAD, IN JUST A HALF HOUR RIDE, ONE ARRIVED TO POCKING WALDSTADT. IT WAS A CAMP IN THE MIDST OF A PLANTED FOREST, LAID OUT, LIKE SOLDIERS STAND IN FORMATION LINES.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN BUILT TO HOUSE THE GERMAN AIR FORCE, FOR IT WAS NEXT TO "AIRPORT II", BUT IN EARLY FORTYSIX WHEN WE ARRIVED THERE WERE NO GERMANS THERE.

A GREAT NUMBER OF DISPLACED HUNGARIAN JEWS LIVED IN THE BARRACKS, HAVING ESCAPED FROM COMMUNIST HUNGARY. THE POPULATION OF THE CAMP AT THAT TIME WAS BELEIVED TO BE ABOUT THREE THOUSAND.

THE CAMP WAS DIVIDED IN TWO. ONE PART WAS RESERVED FOR THE HUNGARIANS WHO WERE NAZI SYMPATHIZERS AND RETREATED WITH THE GERMANS. THEY WERE AFRAID TO RETURN TO HUNGARY FOR FEAR, THEIR PAST ACTIVITIES WILL BACKFIRE. AND THERE WERE IN THE OTHER PART OF POCKING, THE SURVIVORS OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS WHO WANTED TO START A NEW LIFE IN A NEW COUNTRY THAT DID NOT EVEN EXIST.

SOON A SPORTCLUB WAS IN EXISTANCE AT THE LEAD OF GEORGE JAMBOR.

THIS YOUNG MAN ALREADY HAD A WIFE NAMED ~~KLARA~~ KLARA. SOMEONE ASKED HIM AT THE CLUB WHETHER HE JUST GOT MARRIED? THIS IS WHAT HE SAID: " I HAD TYPHOID FEVER AND WHEN I REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS I WAS INFORMED THAT KLARA WAS MY WIFE". THE FUNNY THING WAS THAT MANY PEOPLE THOUGHT THAT KLARA'S MOTHER WAS HIS WIFE. SHE WAS YOUNG AND PRETTY. ONE DAY KLARA FOUND OUT THAT GEORGE VISITED A "HOUSE OF ILL REPUTE" WITH HIS BACHELOR FRIENDS WHEN ON A SPORT TRIP, IN AN OTHER CITY.

KLARA TOLD ME THAT FROM THAT TIME ON SHE CHARGED HIM FOR "SEXUAL FAVORS". SOON SHE WAS THE BEST DRESSED WOMAN IN THE CAMP. SHE EVEN ACQUIRED TWO FOX BOAS, WHICH OF COURSE WAS VERY OUT OF PLACE IN A REFUGEE CAMP.

KLARA WAS A VERY GIFTED HATMAKER. SHE USED TO MAKE MODEL HATS OUT OF NEWSPAPER, AND WORE THEM IN THE CAMP TO ADVERTISE. IF ONE DID NOT KNOW THE REASON, COULD HAVE MISTAKEN HER FOR AN "ECCENTRIC". SHE THOUGHT SHE WILL ATTRACT CUSTOMERS, NOT REALIZING THAT THE REST OF US DID NOT HAVE CLOTHES TO WEAR WITH HATS.

GEORGE DID NOT HAVE A CHANCE TO FINISH HIS EDUCATION YET, LIKE MOST OF US YOUNG SURVIVORS. AFTER HAVING SPENT SOME YEARS WITH KLARA AND HER MOTHER IN GERMANY AND ITALY, THEY FINALLY WERE ABLE TO EMIGRATE TO THE STATES.

GEORGE WENT BACK TO SCHOOL, SPECIALIZING IN AIRCONDITION ENGINEERING, FOR OFFICE BUILDINGS AND CHURCHES. THIS WAS IN THE FIFTIES. WORKING AT THE RIGHT PLACE AND RIGHT TIME HE MADE A GREAT FORTUNE IN SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA.

KLARA AND GEORGE HAD TWO CHILDREN, A BOY AND A GIRL. IT WAS THANKSGIVING TIME IN EIGHTYNINE. GEORGE CALLED KLARA FROM THE OFFICE, TELLING HER HE WILL BE IN TIME FOR THE TURKEY DINNER.

WHEN GEORGE HUNG UP, HE GOT A HEART ATTACK, AS KLARA DISCOVERED WHEN SHE GOT ANXIOUS ABOUT HIM NOT SHOWING UP. HE WAS DEAD BY THE TIME KLARA ARRIVED IN THE OFFICE.

IN POCKING THE SPORT CLUB HAD OTHER EVENTS BESIDES SPORT. THE MOST POPULAR NIGHTS WERE WHEN DANCE WAS SCEDULED. WE DANCED TO THE MUSIC OF A RECORD PLAYER. THERE WERE JUST A FEW RECORDS, BUT THE MOST REQUESTED SONG "RAMONA" MADE DANCING A HAPPY EVENT EVEN THOUGH JUST FOR A SHORT TIME.

IT WAS THERE, WHERE THE HORRORS OF THE PAST YEARS WERE FORGOTTEN MOMENTARILY, WHERE THE MUSIC TOOK OVER THE STRAINS OF THE DESPARATE EFFORTS TO STAY SANE AFTER THE HOLOCAUST. WE WERE HAPPY TO IMMERSE OURSELVES INTO THE MUSIC AND WALTZ TROUGH THE NIGHT AND PRETEND ALL IS WELL WITHIN.

OCCASIONALLY THERE WERE OTHER EVENTS IN THE CAMP.

I REMEMBER AT ONE TIME A POLISH JEW, AN OPERA SINGER GAVE A CONCERT. HE SANG AN ARIA FROM THE "LAND OF SMILES". ~~IN~~ POLISH. ^{were very upset} FOR THE JEWS ORIGINATING FROM POLAND, (AFTER THE WAR) POLISH WAS A HATED LANGUAGE. THEY ALL SPOKE THE BEAUTIFUL YIDDISH AND HEBREW. THEY WERE FIRST JEWS, NOT POLISH. THE HUNGARIANS CONSIDERED THEMSELVES HUNGARIAN, WHOSE RELIGION WAS "ISRAELITE".

GYUSZI THE POET TOLD ME THAT IN ONE OF THE HANGARS THERE WAS A BOXING MATCH BETWEEN A VERY FIT AFRICAN-AMERICAN SOLDIER AND A NOT SO FIT JEWISH BOY FROM BUDAPEST. GYUSZI SAID THAT EVERYONE EXPECTED JUST A FEW ROUNDS BEFORE THE SOLDIER KNOCKS OUT "OUR" BOY. TO THE SURPRISE OF ALL THAT WAS NOT WHAT HAPPENED, IT WORKED THE OTHER WAY AROUND AND IT MADE THE CAMP HAPPY AND PROUD.

IT WAS AN INTERESTING FACT THAT THE PEOPLE OF POCKING WERE STRONG, AND FULL OF ENTHUSIASM. SEE, THEY WERE THE FITTEST WHO SURVIVED ONE TO FIVE YEARS OF CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

IN POCKING THERE WAS NOTHING TO USE THEIR ENERGY FOR, BECAUSE THIS WAS A CAMP ONE FELT TRANSIT IN, AND ONE JUST WAITED, AND WAITED. WAITED FOR THE FUTURE, FOR A VERY ELUSIVE FUTURE THAT ONE DID NOT KNOW WHAT WILL BRING. THIS WAS A CRAZY WORLD. WE KNEW ANOTHER KIND, BUT THERE WAS NO WAY OF GOING BACK TO THE WAYS OF OUR PARENTS.



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Gyusri The
Peet and
Gzuu on
Their wed-
ding day.

Gyusri.

The family.



A FEW AMONG US , WHO HAD RELATIVES IN THE USA AND OTHER COUNTRIES, CONTACTED THEM IN HOPE OF ENCOURAGEMENT. THERE WAS ALSO A STRONG ORGANIZED GROUP OF ZIONISTS. WE COULD HARDLY WAIT TO GO TO ISRAEL. IT WAS ILLEGAL FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE BRITS.

THE ZIONISTS WERE SETTING UP SCHOOLS AND PICKED OUT INDIVIDUALS FOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING. GYUSZI THE POET WAS AMONG THE CHOSEN ONES.

HE WAS A TALL, THIN THINKER OF LOFTY THOUGHTS. A POET. HIS POEMS WERE PUBLISHED AS EARLY AS THE AGE OF THIRTEEN. AT THAT TIME HE RELIED ON IMAGINATION, BUT HIS LATER WRITINGS ARE WITNESSES TO HIS DEEP CONCERN, AND SENSITIVITY, AND HIS FEELINGS OF BEING ONE WITH EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE.

GYUSZI'S POEMS CRYES FOR, AND INSTEAD OF ALL OF US, AND FOR OUR SUFFERINGS AND PAINS THAT OUR GENERATION CARRIES IN OUR BODIES AND SOULS. SOME OF HIS POEMS POINTS AT THE INHUMANITY THAT NO ONE DESERVES.

GYUSZI, NOW ALEX BONDY, WAS PICKED OUT AND WAS SENT TO ITALY TO STUDY, WHERE HE ALSO WROTE HIS HAUNTINGLY BEAUTIFUL, AND INCREDIBLY SENSITIVE TO HUMAN SUFFERING POEM "IN ROME" AND "SORIANO", WHICH LIKE A HUGE PAINTED CANVAS-MIRROR REFLECTS ALL SIDES OF LIFE EVEN THE ONE NOT LIVED, THE LIFE OF DREAMS AND HOPES..

SINCE THAT WAS ALL WE HAD.

IMRE RUBIN WAS THE STAR OF THE SPORT CLUB, THE FAMOUS SOCCER PLAYER POCKING WAS PROUD OF. IMRE AND HIS YOUNGER BROTHER TIBOR, AND A SISTER (LINDA?) CAME FROM A VERY RELIGIOUS FAMILY. IT SEEMED TO ME THAT THEIR RELIGION WAS HELPING OTHERS. LINDA WAS A NURSE ANYWAY.

WHEN IMRE WAS IN FORCED LABOR, ONE OF THE INMATES BROKE HIS GLASSES, AND COULD NOT SEE WITHOUT THEM. IMRE TOOK IT ON HIMSELF THAT THE AUTHORITIES, AND GUARD WOULD NOT LEARN OF IT. WHEN THEY WERE MARCHING TO WORK AND BACK, IMRE ALWAYS HELD THIS PERSON'S ARM IN A WAY THE GUARDS WOULD NOT SEE IT, GUIDING HIM, AND DOING SO HE HE PROBABLY SAVED HIS LIFE.

TIBOR , HIS YOUNGER BROTHER'S STORY FILLS A BOOK. HE WAS A HERO OF THE KOREAN WAR OF NO PARALLEL. EVEN WHEN HE HIMSELF WAS JUST WOUNDED, HE CARRIED A STRETCHER OF ANOTHER WOUNDED PERSON. HE CAPTURED A LARGE NUMBER OF ENEMIES SINGLE HANDEDLY, DISARMED THEM, SAVING THE LIFE OF HIS COMRADES. WHEN HE WAS CAPTURED, HE REPEATEDLY STOLE FOOD FOR HIS COMRADES, KEEPING ALIVE FORTY PRISONERS IN THIS MANNER, RISKING HIS LIFE EVERY TIME, AS WITNESSES TESTIFY.

TIBI WAS RECOMMENDED FOR CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL AND SILVER, BUT BY SOME FOUL UP, HIS CASE IS STILL PENDING.

IMRE MARRIED A LOVELY PERSON, AN OTHER SURVIVOR NAMED GLORIA. THEY RAISED TWO CHILDREN. TIBOR ALSO MARRIED A BEAUTIFUL GIRL IVONNE AND HAVE CHILDREN. THE WHOLE FAMILY WAS HEARTBROKEN WHEN THEIR BELOVED SISTER GLORIA DIED IN A CAR ACCIDENT.. IMRE ALSO PASSED AWAY IN EIGHTYSIX.

THERE WERE QUITE FEW PEOPLE OF THE SPORT CLUB LESS FAMOUS...

IN POCKING I LIVED IN A ROOM WITH SIX OTHER PEOPLE. IRENE, HER BROTHER LACI, HIS GIRLFRIEND EVA, GEZA, TURI, A WOMAN WHOSE NAME ESCAPES ME. THE ROOM WAS FULL AND THERE WAS PLACE ONLY FOR SO MANY CHAIRS. WE PUSHED THE TABLE CLOSE TO A BED, WHEN WE SAT DOWN AROUND THE TABLE ON FRIDAY EVENINGS. SOME OF US SAT ON THE BED.

THE ROOM WAS PARTLY DEVIDED WITH CLOSETS, MORE LIKE LOCKERS, MADE OF METAL. ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROOM IRENE AND I HAD OUR BED. IT WAS A VEY SMALL PLACE BUT WHEN WE CAME BACK FROM HUNGARY WE HAD TO FIT IN ONE MORE BED FOR ZSUZSIKA, WHO CAME BACK WITH US JOINING HER COUSIN EVA IN OUR ROOM.

ZSUZSIKA HIRSCH WAS SIXTEEN YEARS OLD. NOT MUCH AFTER ARRIVING TO POCKING SHE BECAME ENGAGED TO VIKTOR, TO BE MARRIED SOON.

IT WAS NO SECRET THAT VIKTOR WAS ALSO ENGAGED TO A GERMAN GENTILE GIRL IN AN OTHER CITY. STILL EVERYTHING LOOKED GOOD FOR ZSUZSIKA.

A FEW DAYS BEFORE VIKTOR' S WEDDING WAS TO BE TAKEN PLACE TO THE GERMAN GIRL VIKTOR DISAPPEARED, LEAVING ZSUZSIKA WITHOUT A WORD..... GYUSZI TOOK IT UPON HIMSELF TO CHEER HER UP BY KEEPING HER COMPANY.

THE SURROUNDING OF THE CAMP WAS BEAUTIFUL ESPECIALLY IN WINTER TIME, WHEN HEAVY SNOW RESTED ON THE PINE FOREST, GLITTERING IN THE SUN. THE FOLLOWING IS AN EXCERPT FROM A LETTER ,FROM GYUSZI.

" THE FOREST WAS FULL OF HOPPING RABBITS,
AND OWLS WERE SITTING ON THE TREES, WINKING AT US.
ONE COULD SEE A HERD OF DEER AS THEY WERE LED BY
A BULL TO THE BUBBLY RIVULET FOR A DRINK,
AT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST".

WE KEPT BUSY WITH WHAT WAS AVAILABLE. TAKING LONG WALKS IN THE SNOW WAS MY FAVORITE SPORT. SOME OF THE CAMPS PEOPLE WORKED IN THE KITCHEN, OTHERS IN THE OFFICES OF THE CAMP. IN ONE OF THE OFFICES THERE WAS AN UPROAR ONE DAY. A FORMER INMATE OF CONCENTRATION CAMP DISCOVERED, THAT AN EX CAPO HAD A RESPONSIBLE JOB THERE. SHE WAS REPORTED TO THE AUTHORITIES. WE NEVER SAW HER AGAIN.

THERE WAS EVEN A CAMP POLICE, WHICH WE CALLED THE " KNIGHTS OF SPINACH ", BECAUSE OF THE COLOR OF UNIFORM THEY WERE WEARING.

MOST YOUNG MEN WERE REALLY VERY BUSY WITH ACQUIRING OR TRYING TO, WIFES. THEY SEEMED MUCH MORE ANXIOUS, MUCH MORE READY TO ESTABLISH A NEW FAMILY TO REPLACE THE OLD ONE THEY HAD BEFORE THE WAR, AND THEY KEPT ON SEARCHING FOR THE RIGHT MATES.

POCKING WAS ALSO A PLACE WHERE THE DIFFERENT BACK-GROUND, DIFFERENT NATIONALITIES OF JEWS MET ON THEIR MUTUAL DESIRE TO GO TO SRAEL. IT WAS NOT EASY TO COMMUNICATE. HUNGARIAN JEWS DID NOT SPEAK YIDDISH. BEFORE THE WAR THEY EVEN LOOKED DOWN ON PEOPLE WHO DID. AS A HUNGARIAN JEW I STARTED TO STUDY HEBREW AT THE AGE OF SIX. LUCKILY THE NEXT LANGUAGE AT AGE TEN WAS GERMAN. IT HELPED ME TO COMMUNICATE WITH JEWS FROM POLAND. THEY SPOKE TO ME YIDDISH AND I ANSWERED IN GERMAN. BUT SOME STILL HAD DOUBTS THAT I WAS JEWISH.

ON MY WAY FOR A WALK I STARTED A CONVERSATION WITH A POLISH FAMILY, WHO WERE STANDING OUTSIDE THE PLACE THEY LIVED.

WE WERE A FRIENDLY BUNCH OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMP. THE YOUNG MAN TOLD ME AFTER A SHORT WHILE " YOU CANNOT BE A JEW IF YOU DID NOT LEARN YIDDISH ". WELL, "I STUDIED HEBREW" I SAID. " YOU MEAN YOU CAN READ HEBREW?" "YES". HE WENT IN HIS ROOM TO GET A HEBREW PRINTED NEWSPAPER.. HE PUT IT IN FRONT OF ME. HE SAID "READ IT".

I ANSWERED " LOOK I CANNOT READ IT WITHOUT DOTS". HE LOOKED AT ME UNBELIEVELINGLY, AND SLOWLY TOOK OUT A FOUNTAIN PEN FROM HIS POCKET, UNSCREWED IT, LOOKED AT ME AND BACK AT THE PAPER SEARCHING FOR AND FINDIDNG THE RIGHT WORD HE DOTTED IT, AND PUT THE PAPER AGAIN INFRONT OF ME. " NOW READ IT " HE SAID, NOT EXPECTING FOR ME TO BE ABLE TO.

I LOOKED AT THE WORD AND SAID " TELEGRAM". THE YOUNG MAN LOOKED AT MY FACE, AND FLUSHED IN HIS HAPPINESS, AND STARTED JUMPING UP AND DOWN REPEATING AT EVERY JUMP "SHE IS JEWISH, SHE IS JEWISH, SHE IS JEWISH ", I WAS OVERWHELMED AT HIS HAPPINESS, AND HIS HAPPINESS SPREAD TO US LIKE A CONTAGIOUS DESEASE.

IT WAS A MOST MARVELOUS FEELING, BEING ABLE TO BE HAPPY ABOUT BEING JEWISH. I JUST REALIZED FOR THE FIRST TIME AFTER THE WAR THAT THERE IS A CERTAIN GOODNESS, HAPPINESS ABOUT BEING JEWISH AFTER ALL. AFTER THE KICK AT THE AGE OF FOUR, THAT WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A REMARK " ROTTEN JEW ". AFTER THE HOLOCAUST, WHEN ALL GOODNESS SEEMED TO DISAPPEAR ABOUT BEING JEWISH. HERE, NOW, THIS JOY HAD A REBIRTH BY MY ABILITY TO READ IN THE YIDDISH NEWSPAPER "TELEGRAM " THAT WAS PRINTED IN HEBREW.

THE JEWISH BOYS OF POLISH ORIGIN SEEMED SOMEHOW TO BE MORE ATTRACTED TO HUNGARIAN ORIGIN GIRLS. IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN OUR REPUTATION FOR GOOD COOKING. EVEN THE LANGUAGE BARRIER WAS BRIDGED WHEN A GIRL

TOLD HER POLISH SUITOR, THAT SHE WILL MARRY HIM WHEN THEY CAN COMMUNICATE. THEY LEARNED EACH OTHER'S LANGUAGE AND LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

IRENE MY ROOM MATE (AGAIN) IN POCKING TURNED OUT TO BE A VERY GOOD FRIEND AS TIME WENT BY. THE FRIENDSHIP LASTED UNTIL SHE DIED IN EIGHTYFOUR. I WAS VERY SAD "TO LET HER GO." AND SPENT AS MUCH TIME WITH HER IN HER LAST MONTHS AS MY SCEDULE PERMITTED. I WAS ATTENDING MY LAST YEAR AT THE TIME, AT NORTHRIDGE UNIVERSITY.

AS I SLOWLY LEARNED ABOUT HER, SHE WAS AN INCREDIBLY RESPONSIBLE PERSON AT A VERY YOUNG AGE. IRENE WAS THE ONLY GIRL IN THE FAMILY OF FOUR CHILDREN. "MY MOTHER, - SHE TOLD ME - NEVER TOOK CARE OF MY FATHER AND US. MY FATHER WORKED VERY HARD AND DID NOT DESERVE TO WALK AROUND IN SOCKS FULL OF HOLES. WHEN I WAS BIG ENOUGH TO NOTICE IT, I DARNED THEM AT NIGHT, AND TOOK CARE OF THE BOY'S TOO!"

LACI HER BROTHER, WHO CAME WITH HER TO POCKING LOVED HER SO MUCH, THAT I THINK, HE WOULD HAVE EVEN GIVEN HER A BAR OF CHOCLATE, DID SHE ASK FOR IT. BUT SHE DID NOT, SINCE SHE COULD ALWAYS HAVE MINE WITHOUT ASKING.

IRENE WAS AN UNBEATEN CHESS PLAYER, AND THAT WAS THE CAUSE OF THE END OF A FEW LOVE STORIES, EVEN BEFORE STARTED.

ON DAY AN UNUSUALLY NEAT BOY NAMED ARPI SCHWARZ CAME KNOCKING ON THE DOOR. (NOW "ARPAD ANTIQUES" IN WASHINGTON DC.) HE WAS ASKING ABOUT THE GIRL WHO PLAYED CHESS. IRENE LIKED HIM FROM THE START. THERE WERE SOME SPARKS FLYING BETWEEN THEM. AFTER JUST TWO WEEKS OF LOSING GAMES AFTER GAMES, ARPI COULD NOT TAKE IT ANY MORE AND GAVE UP BOTH IRENE AND CHESS PLAYING WITH HER.

THERE WAS ANOTHER YOUNG MAN WHO WAS INTERESTED IN IRENE AND CHESS. SHE LIKED HIM TOO, BUT HER PRIDE IN THE GAME WOULD NOT LET HER LOSE, AND ANYWAY WE LEARNED THAT HE WAS MARRIED, AND WANTED TO MAKE HIS WIFE JEALOUS, IRENE WAS VERY UPSET.

EVIKE, LACI'S GIRLFRIEND HAD A FANTASTIC APPETITE AND HER "YOU KNOW WHAT" WAS OUT OF PROPORTION. THERE WAS AN OTHER THING OR TWO ABOUT HER. SHE WAS VERY JEALOUS OF EVERYONE. ONE DAY SHE ACCUSED ME THAT I STOLE HER MOTHER'S EARRINGS, TRYING TO MAKE ME LOOK BAD INFRONT OF LACI. EVIKE ALSO WAS JUST UNABLE TO STOP TALKING.

AS HER PROPORTION KEPT EXPANDING, I MET SONIA, A NEIGHBOR. SONIA ASKED ME IF EVA WAS EXPECTING A BABY. I SAID "NO BUT SHE DOES EAT A LOT ". EVIKE WAS HAVING A STOMACH TROUBLE EATING A LOT. SHE WENT TO SEE THE DOCTOR. THE DOCTOR TOLD HER THAT THE BABY WAS PUSHING HER STOMACH, BUT THE BABY WAS DUE IN TWO WEEKS ANYWAY. A BEAUTIFUL BABY BOY WAS BORN TO THEM. UNFORTUNATELY HE DIED AT THE AGE OF THIRTY.

A DAUGHTER WHO WAS BORN IN SAN FRANCISCO IS WELL AND ALIVE. EVA TOO PASSED AWAY IN SANFRANCISCO, WHERE LACI MADE HIS FORTUNE IN REAL ESTATE. IRENE WENT NEXT AS I MENTIONED, LEAVING A LOVING AND DEVOTED HUSBAND AND TWO WONDERFUL CHILDREN SANDY AND ROBERT. THE HUSBAND, FREDDY JERUCHIM WAS DEAD IN SIX WEEKS.

STILL IN POCKING , LACI SUPPLIED US WITH A LOT OF MERRIMENT WITH HIS CHARACTER, AND ACTIONS.

HE WAS AN INCREDIBLY STINGY PERSON, AND IT BROUGHT HIM NOTHING BUT LOSS ALL THE TIME. LET ME GIVE YOU A TASTE OF WHICH.

SOME OF US (BY THIS TIME) WORKED IN THE CAMP AND AS PAY WE GOT CHOCOLATE BARS, SUGAR, CIGARETTES.... LACI ALSO WORKED AND HE SHARED OUR PAY WITH US. HIS CHOCOLATE AND STUFF WAS LOCKED AWAY IN THE METAL CLOSET. YES, HE BOUGHT A LOCK. THE REST OF US PUT EVERYTHING ON THE TABLE, TO SHARE WITH THOSE WHO DID NOT HAVE A JOB. HE WAS SAVING HIS GOODS FOR A PURPOSE.

IT WAS WINTERTIME, AND A VERY COLD EVENING WHEN HE CAME INTO THE ROOM WITH AN ENTHUSIASTIC LOOK. HE STARTED TO RUB HIS PALMS TOGETHER IN AN UP AND DOWN MOTION. IRENE WAS SITTING ON HER COT READING A BOOK. I WAS LOOKING AT LACI. SOMETHING WAS BREWING FOR SURE. IRENE GLANCED AT HER BROTHER AND ASKED " WHAT IS UP LACIKA?.

LACI ANSWERED WHILE TAKING OFF HIS CAP AND COAT, OVERCOAT. "I AM GOING TO MUNICH TOMORROW TO THE BLACKMARKET, I HAVE NOW TWENTY BARS OF CHOCOLATE." IRENE WENT BACK TO HER BOOK, SAYING NOTHING..THEN GEZA, WHO WAS A QUIET PERSON SAID " YOU BETTER THINK IT OVER OR YOU MIGHT END UP IN JAIL." LACI SAID " I AM GOING TO STUFF THEM IN MY KNEE SOCKS, AND NO ONE WILL NOTICE THEM UNDER THE BAGGY WIDE SLACKS." GEZA INSISTED " I WOULD NOT DO IT " AND HE WAS SHAKING HIS HEAD AS IN NO, NO.

LACI GOT HIS KEY FROM HIS POCKET AND OPENED THE LOCK OF THE METAL CLOSET. FIRST HE TOOK OUT JUST ONE BAR OF CHOCOLATE. HE PUT IT ON THE TABLE. AS I LOOKED AT HIS FACE AGAIN, THAT WAS SO RED FROM THE COLD WHEN HE CAME IN, IT TURNED ASH GRAY.

LACI STEPPED BACK TO THE CLOSET ONCE MORE AND GRABBED THE REMAINING BARS WITH BOTH HANDS, AND TREW THEM ON THE TABLE. HE LOOKED AS IF HE WAS GOING TO GET A HEART ATTACK. IRENE LOOKED UP, HEARING THE CLATTER OF THE CHOCOLATES, AND ALSO NOTICED HER BROTHER'S FACE

SHE GOT UP FROM THE COT AND WALKED TO THE TABLE, STILL LOOKING AT LACI. WE ALL CLOSED IN.....AND WHAT WE SAW WAS, THAT NOT ONE BAR OF CHOCOLATE WAS UNNIBLED BY THE MICE. HE STOCKED THEM AWAY ENJOYING OURS, TO MAKE MONEY FOR HIMSELF. BUT THE MICE PUT AN END TO HIS AMBITIONS, HIS GREED. WELL WE COULD NOT HELP BUT LAUGH WITHOUT

SAYING ANYTHING. HIS SUGAR COLLECTION WAS ALSO RUINED BY DROPPINGS. LACI DID NOT ASK US WHY WE WERE LAUGHING, HE WAS SO DISMAYED.

WHILE THIS WAS HAPPENING ANOTHER PERSON, TURI, AMUSED HIMSELF WITH FILTERED CIGARETTES. HE MOISTENED THE FILTERS AND TREW THEM TOWARD THE CEILLING WITH A CERTAIN MOVEMENT OF THE WRIST.

THE CIGARETTES ALL GOT GLUED TO THE CEILLING. AND WE KEPT ON LAUGHING..... THE CIGARETTES HANGING OVER OUR HEADS.

THERE WERE QUITE A FEW BEAUTIFUL GIRLS IN THE CAMP, BUT LILLY WAS ON TOP OF THE LIST. LILLY RAN AWAY FROM HUNGARY WITH HER NON-JEWISH HUSBAND, BUT LIVED IN THE JEWISH SECTION.

WE, THE HUNGARIAN JEWS DID NOT LOOK VERY KINDLY AT THE NON-JEWISH HUNGARIANS, SINCE THEY WERE WILLINGLY COOPERATING WHEN THE JEWS WERE SINGLED OUT FOR SCAPEGOATS FOR EVERY ILL OF EUROPE, EVEN AFTER THE WAR. IT WAS THE HUNGARIANS THAT PUT THE JEWS IN GHETTOES, INTO CONCENTRATED PLACES, WHERE FROM WE WERE SHIPPED OUT TO AUSCHWITZ AND OTHER CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

I HAVE HARDLY SAW ANY GERMANS, AND NONE AT THE TIME WE WERE TAKEN AWAY. THESE WERE RECENT FACTS, NOT YET HISTORY THAT WERE NOT EASY TO DIGEST.

THESE HAPPENINGS WERE HARD FOR US TO COMPREHEND, BECAUSE WE WERE HUNGARIAN FIRST, OUR LANGUAGE WAS HUNGARIAN, AND WE DID NOT

THINK THERE WAS A DIFFERENCE, EXCEPT THAT WE WENT TO TEMPLE, AND THEY TO CHURCH. (I WAS SIXTEEN AT THE TIME.) BUT THESE FEELINGS ALL CHANGED DURING THE WAR AND NOW WE SEPARATED OURSELVES TO "WE" AND "THEY".

LILLY GOT MARRIED AT A VERY YOUNG AGE. HER HUSBAND WAS SIX YEARS OLDER. A VERY GOOD LOOKING AND A KIND PERSON AT THE TIME.

THE TROUBLE STARTED WITH GETTING MARRIED. THEY WERE NOT ABLE TO GET AN APARTMENT OF THEIR OWN AND MOVED IN WITH HIS PARENTS.

UNFORTUNATELY HIS FATHER WAS A HEAVY DRINKER, AND LILLY'S HUSBAND WAS SO ANGRY WITH THE FATHER FOR GETTING DRUNK, THAT HE BEAT UP HIS FATHER REPEATEDLY.

LILLY WAS NOT USED TO THIS KIND OF FAMILY AND WHEN IT HAPPENED THE FIRST TIME SHE TOLD HER HUSBAND THAT SHE COULD NOT TAKE IT EMOTIONALLY AND COULD NOT LIVE THIS WAY. THE HUSBAND WARNED HER THAT IF SHE WILL MENTIONED IT AGAIN, OR BRING UP THE SUBJECT HE WILL SURELY BREAK HER BONES. AFTER WHAT SHE SAW HE WAS DOING TO HIS OWN FATHER, SHE WAS CERTAIN HE WOULD.

LUCKILY HE WAS CALLED UP FOR SERVICE IN THE ARMY AND LILLY'S LIFE WAS RELATIVELY GOOD, POSING AS A GENTILE. SHE WORKED AS A DRESSMAKER WHILE HE WAS AWAY. WHEN HE RETURNED AFTER THE WAR, LILLY SUGGESTED THEY RUN AWAY FROM COMMUNISM. SHE DID NOT WANT TO

GO BACK TO THE SAME PATTERN OF LIVING.

LIKE SO MANY OTHER JEWS, THEY TOO ESCAPED WITH FALSE PAPERS AS RETURNING SCHWABS TO GERMANY. LILLY'S HUSBAND WAS NOT POPULAR WITH US, WHEN WE LEARNED HE SERVED IN THE ARMY. IT MADE US SUSPICIOUS, SINCE MANY OF THOSE IN THE LOWEST RANKS IN THE ARMY WAS USED TO GUARD THE JEWS AT WORK, AND ON GETTING TOO WEEK TO DO THAT , TO KILL THEM.

THAT WAS WHAT HAPPENED TO MY BELOVED BROTHER VILI, IN BOR.

LILLY AND HER HUSBAND OCCUPIED ONE WHOLE ROOM, WHICH WAS UNUSUAL. ALL THE ROOMS HAD MORE OCCUPANTS.

TWO NEWCOMERS WERE LOOKING FOR A PLACE, WHICH WAS NOT EASY TO FIND. LILLY WAS TAKING A WALK WHEN SHE MET THEM AND STARTED TO TALK. SHE TOLD THEM THAT THERE WAS PLACE FOR THEM WHERE SHE LIVED. THESE BOYS SEEMED TO BE VERY NICE AND SHE DID NOT THINK IT WOULD BE HARD TO LIVE WITH THEM. GABOR WAS SIXTEEN AT THE TIME, AND PALI EIGHTEEN.

GABOR WAS FROM THE CITY OF FELEGYHAZA A QUIET SMALL TOWN, SORROUNDED BY GRAIN, CORN, AND FRUIT GROWING FIELDS. GABOR'S FATHER DR.STRASSER WAS A LAYYER, AND A BUSINESS MAN, BUT HE WAS BETTER KNOWN AS A PHILANTROPIST. GABOR HAD A YOUNGER SISTER BEFORE THE WAR.

Dr. Gabor Strasser + Claire

Claire and A.J.

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Linda with the children



⊗ Tessa
x Gabor

x

HER NAME WAS KLARIKA. HE LOVED HER VERY MUCH. SHE TOO WAS MURDERED WITH THE REST OF HIS FAMILY. GABOR COULD NOT STAY IN FELEGYHAZA AFTER RETURNING FROM CONCENTRATION CAMP AND NOT FINDING ANYONE OF HIS FAMILY.

WHILE SPENDING A SHORT TIME IN THE CITY HE TRIED TO RECOVER SOME OF THE FAMILY JEWELS THEY DID NOT HAND OVER TO THE NAZI REGIME. WITH THE HELP OF A SABOTAGING RUSSIAN SOLDIER, HE BROKE INTO HIS FAMILY'S HOME THEY JUST BUILT BEFORE THE WAR, AND NOW WAS OCCUPIED BY SOME RUSSIANS. HE DUG UP THE BASEMENT FLOOR AND FOUND THE HIDDEN JEWELS. HE SOLD SOME OF THEM AND BOUGHT HIS WAY TO FREEDOM, GOING THROUGH SEVERAL BORDERS ILLEGALLY, UNTIL FINALLY HE TOO ARRIVED TO POCKING, WHERE LILLY OFFERED TO SHARE THEIR ROOM WITH THEM.

GABOR REGISTERED TO GO TO THE USA. HE WAS MORE ELIGIBLE ON ACCOUNT OF HIS AGE, BUT HE SPENT A LOT OF TIME WAITING FOR THE EMIGRATION ANYWAY.

IN FORTYSEVEN AFTER ARRIVING IN THE USA GABOR FOUND HIMSELF IN A VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION. HE WAS A TEENAGER WHO ALREADY WENT THROUGH (BUT IT WAS NOT BEHIND HIM) THE MOST INCREDIBLY TERRIBLE EXPERIENCES, THOSE HAS NOT BEEN HEARD SINCE THE SPANISH INQUISITION, HAVING LOST HIS FAMILY, HIS HOME, HIS TRUST IN THE PEOPLE HE THOUGHT

HIMSELF ONE WITH.

A YEAR OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL TORTURE HE EXPERIENCED IN CONCENTRATION CAMP, WHERE HE WAS STARVED NEAR TO DEATH, ALL THESE EXPERIENCES DID NOT HELP HIM TO FIT INTO THE CROWD, THAT HE WAS ATTENDING SCHOOL WITH IN NEW YORK.

THESE WERE CARELESS HAPPY YOUNG PEOPLE, WHOSE WAY OF THINKING AND BEHAVIOR WERE TYPICAL OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THE LATE FORTIES EARLY FIFTIES. THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH THEM. BUT GABOR FELT HIMSELF APART, NOT HAVING BEEN ABLE TO RECOVER YET FROM THE EMOTIONAL LOSSES. THERE WAS NO ONE HE COULD TALK TO ABOUT HIS GRIEFS, WHO WOULD UNDERSTAND HIM, NO ONE UNTIL MATYI AND I CAME TO AMERICA.

GABOR HAD A BRILLIANT MIND. IN HIS SECOND YEAR IN SCHOOL HE TOOK PART IN A WORLDWIDE SCIENCE COMPETITION AND WAS THE WINNER AMONG TWOTHOUSAND ENTRIES. HE WAS WRITTEN UP IN THE NEW YORK TIMES, AND WAS HONORED IN A CEREMONY BY THE BEST SCIENTISTS.

GABOR BECAME A FREQUENT VISITOR WITH US AND WE HAD MEANINGFUL TIMES SPENT TOGETHER. WE WERE ABLE TO TALK ABOUT THINGS THAT WE WERE TRYING TO UNDERSTAND, WHICH WERE VERY HARD TASK ,BUT GAVE US SOME RELEASE.

I HAD TWO BROTHERS BEFORE THE WAR. THEY WERE LOVING, CARING BOYS, MIRRORING MY PARENTS ATTITUDE. I MISSED MY BROTHERS VERY MUCH.

GABOR FIT IN AS A BROTHER AND A WONDERFUL RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPED AMONG THE THREE OF US. ON GRADUATING FROM COLLEGE GABOR WAS SENT TO KOREA AS AN OFFICER. BUT LONG BEFORE HE WENT TO KOREA, HE GAVE BLOOD MONTHLY TO THE RED CROSS FOR THOSE ALREADY FIGHTING THERE.

WHEN HE CAME BACK FROM KOREA IT WAS WITH THE MOST BEAUTIFUL AWARDS THE MAYOR OF SEOUL GAVE HIM. THERE WAS A LARGE BEAUTIFUL SILVERBOWL ENGRAVED "IN GRATITUDE TO GABOR STRASSER FROM THE PEOPLE OF SEOUL". HIS NAME WAS EMBROIDERED IN CLOTHS, AND PHOTO ALBUMS WERE INLAYS WITH MOTHER OF PEARLS FOR HIM. IT WAS GABOR WHO MASTER-MINDED THE REBUILDING OF THE CITY FROM ITS RUIN.

YEARS LATER HE WAS APPOINTED AS A WHITE HOUSE ADVISER. GABOR WAS MARRIED BY THAT TIME TO THE LOVELY LINDA PEMBLE AND HAD TWO WONDERFUL CHILDREN, CLAIRE AND A. J.

HERE WE GO BACK TO POCKING.

GABOR AND PALI MET IN POCKING AND BECAME FRIENDS.

LILLY WAS SORRY FOR THE YOUNG BOYS, AND WHEN SHE COOKED SOMETHING SHE COOKED FOR ALL FOUR OF THEM. THE BOYS WERE GRATEFUL FOR THE HOME COOKED FOOD, THEY MISSED FROM "HOME". LILLY WAS THE KIND OF GIRL WHO WAS HAPPIEST WHEN SHE COULD HELP. SHE STILL IS.

WHEN GABOR SETTLED, HE WENT TO GET A JOB IN ONE OF THE

CAMP OFFICES. AT THAT PLACE MARTON SIMONOVITS AND VERA NADAS WORKED UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF RAE FISHER, AN AMERICAN WOMAN WHO WAS WORKING WITH UNNRA. SHE WAS HELPING WITH THE EMIGRATION OF THE DISPLACED PERSONS. RAE WAS NOT A BEAUTY, BUT SHE CHARMED THE BOYS IN THE OFFICE.

THESE BOYS HAD A VENDETTA. IF A HUNGARIAN NAZI CAME IN FOR REGISTRATION FOR EMIGRATION, AFTER THEY FILLED OUT THE PAPERS AND LEFT THE OFFICE, THOSE PAPERS WENT INTO THE GARBAGE. AND THOSE WHO REGISTERED, JUST COULD NOT IMAGINE WHY DID NOT THEY GET AN ANSWER TO THEIR REQUEST.

MARTON, NOW MATYI WAS THE HEAD OF THE OFFICE WHEN RAE WAS ABSENT, WHICH SHE MOSTLY WAS. BUT WHEN SHE WAS IN THE OFFICE SHE WAS ALSO TEACHING MATYI ENGLISH. HE LEARNED THE LANGUAGE IN NO TIME, HAVING A WONDERFUL APTITUDE FOR LANGUAGES.

VERA HAD A CRUSH ON MATYI, BUT HE WAS INVOLVED WITH ME. I LEARNED THIS INFO. FROM VERA'S ROOM MATE AT A LATER TIME.

GABOR GOT THE JOB AT THE OFFICE AND THAT IS HOW THE FRIENDSHIP CAME ABOUT. THE YEAR WAS FORTYSIX.

LILLY WAS STILL UNHAPPY WITH HER HUSBAND. NOW THAT HE DID NOT HAVE A FATHER TO BEAT UP, HE PRACTICED ON LILLY.

LILLY WAS A SENSITIVE, GOOD HEARTED, BEAUTIFUL PERSON, WHO WAS NOT

USED TO BEATING FROM ANYONE. IT DESPAIRED HER THAT HER HUSBAND SLEPPED HER WHEN NO ONE WAS AROUND. LILLY BROKE DOWN ONE DAY WHEN HER HUSBAND WAS OUT AND PALI FOUND HER CRYING. SHE TOLD PALI THAT SHE WANTED TO RUN AWAY FROM HER HUSBAND. PALI WAS ALSO A SENSITIVE PERSON AND FELT THAT HE SHOULD HELP. HE CONTACTED A PERSON WHO HAD FRIENDS IN AN OTHER CITY, AND THEM IF THEY COULD POSSIBLY FIND A PLACE FOR TWO PEOPLE, SO LILLY AND PALI COULD TRANSFER.

THE FRIENDS PROMISED TO LOOK INTO IT AND SOON THERE WAS AN ANSWER. LILLY AND PALI TOOK THE TRAIN, WHEN LILLY'S HUSBAND WAS AWAY FROM HOME.(EVENTUALLY THEY EMIGRATED TO THE USA.)

THE HUSBAND WAS FURIOUS. SOMETIMES LATER ON THE WAY HOME FROM WOOD CUTTING, AN AX IN HIS HAND, HE ENCOUNTERED FREDDY (WHO HELPED LILLY ESCAPE) AND STARTED TO TELL HIM IN DETAIL, HOW WILL HE FINISH THE PERSON WHO HELPED HIS WIFE RUN AWAY..

FREDDY WAS PRETTY SCARED SINCE LILLY'S HUSBAND COULD LEARN ABOUT HIS ACT. THE HUSBAND LOOKED PRETTY WILD, GESTICULATING WITH THE AX. IT WAS LUCKY HE DID NOT KNOW WHO THE CULPRIT WAS.

AND BOY, DID WE REJOICE. WE THOUGHT THIS THE MOST ROMANTIC HAPPENING IN THE CAMP'S HISTORY. PALI, THE "KNIGHT ON THE WHITE HORSE" RESCUING THE BEAUTIFUL LILLY, FROM HER BEASTLY HUSBAND.

THERE CAME A TIME WHEN I RAN OUT OF STOCKINGS. I HAD RUNS ON ALL THE TWO PAIRS. IT WAS OK IF I WORE SLACKS. BUT I HAD A VERY NICE WOOL CREPE DRESS, LIGHT MUSTARD COLOR, AND I WANTED TO WEAR IT. ALL I NEEDED WAS A PAIR OF STOCKINGS TO BE ABLE TO PUT IT ON.

I HEARD ABOUT A PERSON, WHO LIVED A FEW BLOCKS AWAY, WHO COULD FIX THE RUNS AND THE STOCKINGS LOOKED LIKE NEW AGAIN.

I TOOK THEM OVER TO THIS PERSON.. I KNOCKED ON THE DOOR. THIS VERY TALL YOUNG MAN OPENED THE DOOR. I RECOGNIZED HIM RIGHT AWAY. HE WAS THE ONE WHO RESCUED THE DENTIST'S FINGER FROM MY BITE.

I WAS CRACKING NUT WITH MY TOOTH CARELESSLY AND IT CRACKED AND CHIPPED MY TOOTH. I WENT TO SEE THE DENTIST IN THE CAMP. HE WAS A YOUNG MAN. I ASKED HIM TO FIX IT. HE INSISTED THAT IT CANNOT BE FIXED, IT WILL HAVE TO COME OUT...I WAS DESPERATE. I COULD NOT IMAGINE WHY IT COULD NOT BE FIXED. BUT I JUST COULD NOT TALK HIM INTO FIXING IT.

HE GAVE ME AN INJECTION AND AFTER A SHORT WAIT, HE GOT HIS FORCEPS IN MY MOUTH. THE TOOTH WAS A MOLAR. WHEN HE TRIED TO PULL IT OUT I PASSED OUT. THE REST WAS RELATED TO ME. I BIT ON THE FORCEP ALONG WITH THE DENTIST'S THREE FINGERS. HE STARTED TO HOLLER "HELP, HELP!!" AND THIS BOY CAME RUNNING IN FROM THE HALL. THEY OPENED MY MOUTH, AND RESCUED THE FINGERS WHICH HAD DEEP WOUNDS.

WHEN I CAME TO, HE MADE ANOTHER ATTEMPT AND PULLED MY TOOTH. I WAS FEELING VERY WEAK. THE BOY WHO CAME TO THE RESCUE OF THE DENTIST NOW OFFERED TO WALK ME HOME.

WHEN A WEEK LATER I KNOCKED ON THE DOOR OF THE STOCKING FIXER IT WAS HIM WHO OPENED THE DOOR. HE HAD A BIG SMILE, BUT HE DID NOT SAY ANYTHING ABOUT RECOGNIZING ME. SO I SAID "HELLO I AM LOOKING FOR THE PERSON WHO WILL FIX MY STOCKINGS". HE FOLLOWED MY EYES AND SAID " SHE IS MY WIFE, HER NAME IS MAGDI, AND I AM SANYI".

THEY SAID " SIT DOWN " AND SINCE THERE WERE NO CHAIRS I SAT ON THE ARMY COT. I ASKED THEM THE USUAL FIRST QUESTION? "WHERE ARE YOU FROM?. SANYI SAID "I AM FROM BUDAPEST AND MAGDI IS FROM FELEGYHAZA". THERE IS AN OTHER PERSON HERE FROM THERE GABOR STRASSER I TOLD THEM. MAGDI TOLD ME THAT SHE KNEW ABOUT HIM.

I WAS SURPRISED THEY WERE MARRIED SO YOUNG AND ASKED THEM IF THEY WERE MARRIED BACK HOME?. " NO, BUT IT WAS INTERESTING HOW WE GOT MARRIED. WHEN WE ESCAPED FROM HUNGARY WE ALWAYS FOUND OURSELVES SITTING TOGETHER ON THE TRAIN, TRUCK, BUS, AND PEOPLE KEPT ON ASKING: ARE YOU MARRIED?, AND FINALLY A STARTED TO LOOK AT MAGDI MORE CLOSELY. I ASKED HER IF SHE WOULD MARRY ME SINCE EVERYONE SEEMS TO THINK ANYWAY WE BELONG TOGETHER"..

AS HE WAS RELATING THIS TO ME MAGDI DID NOT SAY ANYTHING.

MAGDI WAS A VERY QUIET PERSON. BUT SANYI WAS BEAMING, TALKING, THERE WAS A HAPPYNESS ABOUT HIM, THAT WAS SELDOM SEEN AT THE TIME.

MAGDI FIXED MY STOCKINGS. NOT MUCH LATER THEY WENT, AND EMIGRATED TO AUSTRALIA. A FEW YEARS LATER THEY CAME TO THE STATES.

SANYI FOUND THAT IN AUSTRALIA THE ROUND WHEEL WAS NOT INVENTED YET. THE BUSES RAN ON SQUARE WHEELS HE SAID. SANYI HAD A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR, AND MAGDI IS STILL QUIET. IN NEW YORK SANYI AND HIS FRIEND ROBY ESTABLISHED THE "HOUSE OF CHAINS ", A GOLD CHAIN MANUFACTURING FACTORY. THEY WERE VERY SUCCESSFUL AND RETIRED BEFORE THEIR TIME TO A LIFE OF VACATIONS. THEY HAVE TWO SONS AND FOUR GRANDCHILDREN. SANYI AND MAGDI LOOK BETTER THEN WHEN THEY WERE YOUNG. I HAD AN ONGOING RELATIONSHIP WITH THEM. AT ONE VISIT THEY WERE TALKING ABOUT TIMES PAST.

I WAS TELLING SANYI, " AND IF NOT FOR YOU, THE DENTIST WOULD HAVE LOST THREE FINGERS ". AND THIS IS WHAT HE TOLD ME: "SIT DOWN, I DID NOT WANT TO UPSET YOU AT THE TIME, BUT THE "DENTIST" WAS NOT A DENTIST. HE WAS AN IMPOSTER. HE AND I WERE TOGETHER IN FORCED LABOR CAMP. HE WAS A BICYCLE MECHANIC." THAT WAS WHEN I UNDERSTOOD WHY HE COULD NOT FIX MY TOOTH. HOW LUCKY I WAS, IT WAS NOT A FRONT TOOTH.

ZOLI FRIEDMANN LIVED IN THE SAME BARRACK WITH MATYI, BUT THEY WERE NOT FRIENDS UNTIL TWENTY FIVE YEARS LATER. ZOLI WAS GOOD FRIENDS WITH CHARLIE AND GABOR AND MANY OTHERS. ZOLI CAME FROM A RELIGIOUS FAMILY. HIS MOTHER WAS VERY STRICKT. SHE WAS AWARE OF ZOLI'S KEEN MIND, AND SHE WANTED TO MAKE SURE THAT HE STUDIED FOR GOOD GRADES. ZOLI WANTED TO BECOME AN ARCHITECT.

HE, LIKE MY BROTHER WAS AN OUTSTANDING STUDENT BUT BECAUSE OF THE "NUMERUS CLAUSUS " (SPELLING?) FOR THE JEWS, HE TOO WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND THE UNIVERSITY. INSTEAD HE HAD THIRTY PUPILS WHO NEEDED HELP WITH HOMEWORK AND HE WAS TEACHING THEM IN WHATEVER SUBJECT THEY NEEDED HELP.

ZOLI WAS TAKEN TO AUSCHWITZ IN FORTYFOUR WITH HIS FAMILY AND WAS LIBERATED THERE BY THE RUSSIANS. FOR NO KNOWN REASON HE WAS TAKEN TOGETHER WITH OTHER LIBERATED INMATES TO RUSSIA. THEY WERE TAKEN FIRST TO KAPTOWITZ THEN TO CHERNOWITZ, FROM CHERNOWITZ TO SLUCK. THEY HAD NO IDEA WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THEM. THEY WERE NOT TREATED AS ENEMY PRISONERS, BUT THEY WERE NOT ALLOWED TO LEAVE FOR HOME UNTIL SEPTEMBER FORTYFIVE.

WHEN ZOLI ARRIVED HOME THERE WAS NO FAMILY. LIDIA, HIS SISTER WAS MARRIED AND WAS EXPECTING A BABY, WHEN THE FAMILY WAS DEPORTED. BEING PREGNANT WAS A DEATH SENTENCE.

ZOLI'S PARENTS WERE ALSO SENT TO THE "LEFT" AT THE SAME TIME. ON LEARNING ALL THIS, ZOLI WAS IN NO STATE OF MIND TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL AND FINISH HIS EDUCATION.

THESE HAPPENINGS AFFECTED HIM SO DEEPLY, THAT HE WANTED TO DO SOMETHING FOR THE PEOPLE WHO "LACKED JUSTICE". HE JOINED THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT, WHEN HE CAME TO THE STATES, THE "CORE" AND REPEATEDLY DEMONSTRATED FOR EQUALITY. IN THE MEANTIME CHARLIE, WHO ALSO CAME TO AMERICA, INVITED HIM TO CALIFORNIA TO MANAGE HIS THRIVING JEWEL BUSINESS. ZOLI BECAME VICE PRESIDENT THERE, MANAGING THE PLACE. IN LOS ANGELES HE JOINED THE ADL. AND BECAME THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY. HE GOT SEVERAL AWARDS FOR HIS WORKS IN THE FIELD.

PAST YEARS SINCE HIS RETIREMENT, HE LECTURES TO THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF SCHOOLCHILDREN ABOUT THE EVIL OF HATRED. AND WHAT IT CAN DO TO PEOPLE. HE LECTURES ABOUT HITLER'S EXTERMINATION CAMPS, AND HIS OWN EXPERIENCES. THESE CHILDREN WRITE HIM LETTERS, THANKING HIM FOR ENLIGHTENING THEM. HE GETS LETTERS BY THE THOUSANDS. IN LOS ANG, THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO MET FIRST IN POCKING. WE GET TOGETHER , WHEN-EVER THERE IS A CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION. WE CELEBRATE BEING ALIVE, AND WELL.

CHARLIE LIGETI WAS IN POCKING IN THE EARLY DAYS OF JANUARY FORTYSIX. SOON HE HAD A LOT OF FRIENDS, BEING A VERY CHARMING, VERY YOUNG MAN OF EIGHTEEN. HE WENT TROUGH HELL, NOT EVEN SPENDING A DAY IN CONCENTRATION CAMP.

HE WAS ACTUALLY EXECUTED WITH HIS MOTHER AND FATHER TOGETHER. AT THE TIME HE WAS SEVENTEEN. IT HAPPENED JUST AFTER HIS BIRTHDAY.

THEY WERE TAKEN OUT AT NIGHT FROM THE PRISON INTO THE JANUARY COLD, IN UNDERWEAR AND WERE EXECUTED..... CHARLIE PRETENDED HE WAS DEAD...

NEITHER HIS PARENTS NOR HE DID ANYTHING CRIMINAL. IT HAPPENED IN NAZI TIMES AND THEY HAPPENED TO BE JEWISH. TO MAKE IT JUSTIFIABLE HIS FATHER WAS ACCUSED OF BEING COMMUNIST. IT WAS A MADE UP REASON. THEY WERE ALSO ACCUSED OF PRETENDING TO BE GENTILES. WHICH WAS NOT TRUE. THEY DID NOT HAVE TO PRETEND SINCE THEY WERE EXEMPT FROM THE "JEWISH LAW" BECAUSE CHARLIE'S FATHER DEMONSTRATED PATRIOTISM IN TRANSYLVANIA, WHERE THEY ORIGINALLY LIVED UNDER ROMANIAN OCCUPATION.

AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR CHARLIE'S FATHER WAS A JOURNALIST, PUBLICIST, AND A NOVELIST. HE DEMONSTRATED AND FOUGHT FOR THE INTEREST OF HUNGARIANS DURING THE ROMANIAN OCCUPATION.

LATER THEY MOVED TO BUDAPEST, AND IN NAZI TIMES THEY HAD TO MOVE FROM THEIR HOME TO A HOUSE THAT WAS PROTECTED BY THE SWISS.

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THE FAMILY OF LIGETI LIVED THERE, WITH ONE OF CHARLIE'S GRANDMOTHER FROM HIS MOTHER'S SIDE. SINCE THE PROTECTION OF THE SWISS AND THE EXEMPTION, THEY DID NOT HAVE TO PUT UP A SIGN AS IT WAS REQUIRED FOR OTHER JEWS, THAT JEWS LIVED THERE. BECAUSE OF THIS THE CORNER PHARMACIST REPORTED THEM TO THE "ARROW CROSS" GROUP, THAT THEY PRETENDED TO BE GENTILES. THE LIGETIS WERE PICKED UP BY THE ARROW CROSS MEN AND WERE STRIPPED IN PRISON.

CHARLIE WAS INTERROGATED ABOUT HIS FATHER'S COMMUNIST CONNECTION, WHICH WAS NONEXISTANT, NO MATTER HOW MUCH THEY BEAT HIM. AND SINCE THEY WERE ALREADY STRIPPED ANYWAY, THESE PEOPLE WANTED TO KNOW WHERE THE LIGETIS HID THEIR VALUABLES, AND JEWELRY, WHICH ALSO DID NOT EXIST. CHARLIE WAS VERY BADLY BEATEN ON HIS FACE AND HIS SOLES WITH RUBBER CLUBS AND TRAMPLED OVER HIS BODY.

AND THEN THEY WERE TAKEN OUT, AND AFTER SHOOTING THEM, THEY WERE CHECKED WITH A LANTERN IN CASE THEY NEEDED MORE SHOTS.

CHARLIE WAS HOLDING HIS BREATH, PRETENDING TO BE DEAD. WHEN THE KILLERS WERE SATISFIED WITH THE RESULT, AND LEFT THE SCENE, HE STARTED TO FEEL HIMSELF AND REALIZED THAT THREE SHOTS WENT TROUGH HIM, AND THEY WERE ALL FLESH WOUNDS.

HE GOT UP, AND DAZED, BLEEDING STAGGERING IN THE JANUARY COLD IN UNDERWARE HE WAS WONDERING AIMLESSLY IN THE CRUEL NIGHT.

THERE WAS A CURFEW. A HUNGARIAN PATROL CAME UPON HIM.

CHARLIE WAS SURE THIS WAS TO BE HIS END.

BUT NO, THESE WERE PEOPLE, PEOPLE WHO SUPPORTED HIM.

AND ENCOURAGED HIM, AND TOOK HIM TO THE NEARBY JEWISH HOSPITAL.

THEY TRIED CHEERING HIM UP BY TELLING HIM ALL WILL BE WELL, THE END OF WAR IS NEAR. IN THE HOSPITAL HE GOT TREATMENTS.....AND WAS LIBERATED NINE DAYS LATER, STILL HAVING A CASE OF BLOOD POISONING FROM THE WOUND.

WHEN THE ARROW CROSS PEOPLE PICKED UP THE LIGETI FAMILY, ONE OF THEM POINTED TO THE GRANDMOTHER ASKING WHO SHE WAS. CHARLIE'S MOTHER SAID "SHE IS THE MAID". THE " MAID " WAS LOCKED OUT OF THE APARTMENT. BUT SHE HAD A SET OF KEYS!!

CHARLIE'S FIRST TRIP FROM THE HOSPITAL WAS BACK TO THE APARTMENT. HE FOUND HIS GRANDMOTHER AND AN AUNT THERE. THEY NURSED HIM BACK TO GOOD HEALTH.

IT TOOK HIM FOUR MORE WEEKS TO GET OUT OF BED.

CHARLIE WENT BACK TO SCHOOL TO FINISH HIS H.S. EDUCATION.

IN JAN. FORTYSIX HE LEFT HUNGARY WITH TWO FRIENDS. THEY ARRIVED TO POCKING SAME MOUNTH, TO WAIT LIKE ALL OTHERS.

WHILE WAITING FOR THE FUTURE TO UNFOLD CHARLIE WAS VERY ACTIVE. HE HAD THE ENTHUSIASM OF A PERSON WHO WAS AWARE OF THE

FANTASTIC PRIVILEGED SITUATION WE ALL WERE IN. WE WERE ALIVE!!!!

HE DID NOT ONLY SURVIVE HIS OWN EXECUTION, BUT HE WAS IN GOOD HEALTH, AND SEEMED TO HAVE A GLOW, AN OPTIMISM ABOUT HIM. HE ALWAYS SEEMED TO HAVE A LOOK AS IF A GREAT FORTUNE IS GOING TO HAPPEN ANY MINUTE. AND IT DID. HE MET A YOUNG BEAUTIFUL SINGER EVA FEKETE. EVA HAD A VOICE LIKE A SWEET NIGHTINGALE. SHE WAS EXPOSED AT AN EARLY AGE TO MUSIC AT HOME. HER FATHER WAS A VIOLINIST. EVA KEPT ON SINGING, IMPROVING HER VOICE. LATER SHE ENTERTAINED AND MADE RECORDINGS.

EVA AND CHARLIE GOT MARRIED, EMIGRATED TO LOS ANGELES AND HE ESTABLISHED HIS JEWEL BUSINESS.

EVA GAVE LAVISH PARTIES IN THEIR MANSION, AND SANG FOR US.

AS I LEARNED MORE ABOUT THEM, I LEARNED THAT CHARLIE WAS A, WHAT I CALL A "CLOSET PHILANTHROPIST", HE HELPED AND HELPS PEOPLE IN A VERY DISCRETE WAY, . . SECRETLY. I MET ONE OF HIS RELATIVES IN BUDAPEST. BOZSIKE WAS ABOUT EIGHTY YEARS OLD AT THE TIME WE MET. A PERFECT LADY. CHARLIE TOOK CARE OF HER IN A MANNER NO ONE EXPECTED HIM. THAT SUMMER HE TOOK HER TO THE FRENCH RIVIERA FOR A VACATION WITH A PERSONAL MAID FOR HER. WHEN BOZSIKE TALKED ABOUT CHARLIE, ONE COULD SEE LOVE FLOWING OUT OF HER.

I WAS THERE IN BUDAPEST WITH CHARLIE, WHEN SHE DIED AT THE HOSPITAL AND WE WERE VERY SAD TO SEE HER GO. BOZSIKE LIVED TO BE EIGHTY SEVEN,...AND LEFT HER SAVINGS OF TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS TO CHARLIE. SHE SAVED THAT MUCH FROM WHAT SHE GOT FROM HIM.

BUT LEAVE IT UP TO CHARLIE. HE GAVE IT TO LOCAL CHARITY IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN BUDAPEST.

WHEN ONE ENTERED THE BUILDING WHERE I LIVED IN POCKING, THERE WAS A LARGE ROOM ON THE LEFT SIDE. IT BELONGED TO THE "OTHER" CAMP DENTIST AND HER BROTHER. SHE WAS QUITE DETACHED FROM EVERYONE WHO DID NOT HAVE A DOCTORATE, AND I WAS HIGH SCHOOL AGE.

ANYWAY, ONE EVENING EVIKE DRANK A HOT DRINK AND SHE GOT A TERRIBLE TOOTHACHE. EVIKE ASKED ME TO GO NEXT DOOR AND GET SOME PAINKILLER FOR HER. THE LADY DOCTOR WAS FURIOUS WITH ME, NOT HAVING GONE DURING OFFICE HOURS IN HER OFFICE. SHE GAVE ME TWO ASPIRINS ANYWAY, SO EVIKE COULD GET TROUGH THE NIGHT.

I WAS VERY DISAPPOINTED IN THE DOCTOR'S ATTITUDE. THE WAY I LEARNED AT HOME WAS, IT WAS A PRIVILEGE TO HELP SOMEONE IN DISTRESS.

SHE HAD A VERY GOOD LOOKING BROTHER, BUT FROM THAT TIME ON I WOULD NOT EVEN LOOK AT HIM. SO THIS WAS THE NEXT DOOR NEIGHBOR. ACROSS THE HALLWAY WAS THE ROOM WHERE "THE GIRLS " LIVED. FOUR OF THEM. THE MOTHER, HER DAUGHTERS ROZSI AND MARGIT, AND MARGIT'S DAUGHTER MAGDI. SHE WAS ABOUT TWELVE YEARS OLD. OHHH..THERE WERE TWO MORE GIRLS THERE, NOT RELATED.

MARGIT DENES'S HUSBAND HAD TO FLEE FROM HUNGARY FOR POLITICAL REASONS BEFORE THE WAR, AND THAT SAVED HIS LIFE. HE WAS VERY LUCKY TO HAVE AVOIDED FORCED LABOR AND CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

THE FOUR GIRLS ESCAPED FROM HUNGARY TO FIND MARGIT'S HUSBAND IN THE USA. BUT THEY COULD NOT EMIGRATE THERE, BECAUSE THE QUOTAS WERE FULL, I THINK. SO THEY TRIED TO GO TO CUBA. AFTER REGISTERING, AND WAITING (AND WAITING) FINALLY A LETTER CAME FROM PARIS, THAT THEIR CUBAN VISA IS AWAITING THEM. THEY LEFT POCKING HAPPILY, TO GO TO PARIS, JUST TO LEARN ON ARRIVAL, THAT THERE WAS A MISTAKE THERE WERE NO VISAS. THE GOOD PART WAS THAT THEY SPENT TEN MONTHS IN PARIS WAITING FOR IT. MAGDI BENEFITED FROM THIS, ATTENDING FRENCH SCHOOL.

AFTER TEN MONTHS THEY TOOK THE BOAT TO CUBA. IT STOPPED ON THE WAY IN NEW YORK'S HARBOR. MARGIT AND FAMILY WAS ABLE TO SPEND A DAY WITH MARGIT'S HUSBAND, WHO WAS LOCATED IN THE MEANTIME.

THEY DID NOT HAVE CONTACT DURING THE LONG WAR, AND IT WAS EVIDENT TO MARGIT THAT AN EIGHT YEAR GAP IN MARRIAGE, DOES NOT PROMOTE CONTINUITY.

THE FAMILY SPENT A FEW YEARS IN HAVANA AND MAGDI NOW ATTENDED SPANISH SCHOOL. THEY SENT LETTERS TO US, PRAISING THE CITY . THEY WERE ENCOURAGING US TO GO THERE, BUT MY HEART WAS IN ISRAEL AND STILL HOPED TO GO THERE. FORTUNATELY THEY GOT OUT JUST IN TIME BEFORE THE DOORS WERE CLOSED FOR EXIT FROM CUBA, BY CASTRO. THEY CAME TO THE USA. ROZSI GOT MARRIED TO AN OLD FRIEND A HUNGARIAN MD. THE BRAIDED HAIRED LITTLE GIRL, MAGDI BECAME A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG LADY, PURSUING

HER FATHER'S PROFESSION, PSYCHOLOGY. SHE ALSO WROTE A BOOK ABOUT ABORTION.

THE TWO SISTERS FROM THE SAME ROOM EMIGRATED TO CHICAGO. "BABY" BECAME AN ANTHROPOLOGIST, BUT I NEVER HEARD WHAT HAPPENED TO HER BEAUTIFUL SISTER.

NEXT TO "THE GIRLS" ROOM LIVED A WOMAN FROM POLAND WITH HER DAUGHTER. SHE INVITED ME TO VISIT AND TO MY GREAT SURPRISE THE ROOM WAS FURNISHED WITH REAL FURNITURE. NOT ARMY COTS, NOT METAL CLOSET, BUT FURNITURE MADE OF WOOD!!!!!! THERE WAS A BED A REAL BED, WITH COMFORTERS FILLED WITH GOOSEDOWN. I LOOKED AROUND AMAZED AND NOTICED A SEWING MACHINE IN ONE CORNER WITH MATERIALS AROUND IT. SONIA WAS A DRESSMAKER.. SHE SPOKE BEAUTIFUL GERMAN. AND I WAS ABLE TO CONVERSE WITH HER, AND HER YOUNG DAUGHTER. THEY COULD HARDLY WAIT FOR THE TIME TO GO TO ISRAEL. SONIA'S HUSBAND ESCAPED BEFORE THE GERMANS COULD TAKE HIM TO CAMP.

I WAS NOT FAMILIAR WITH THE REST OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED IN OUR HOUSE. I SEEM TO REMEMBER A TEACHER AND HIS MOM, AND A BOY WHOSE NAME WAS ANDRE. HE WAS TEACHING ENGLISH TO A FEW GIRLS FOR KISSES. HE LEFT BEFORE I DID.

AS I SAID BEFORE THE TRAIN I LEFT ON FOR VIENNA WAS HALF FULL OF HUNGARIAN JEWS TRAVELING WITH FALSE PASSPORT AS SCHWABS. IT WAS A WELL ORGANIZED MOVEMENT TO GET THE JEWS OUT OF THE SCENE OF THE SIXMILLION MURDERED ONES.

ON THAT TRAIN MATYI MET ANOTHER SCHWAB, THAT WAS I. HIS TRAVELING COMPANION TIBI, ALSO MET IRENE. MATYI SPENT THE NIGHT TALKING TO ME ABOUT HIS SISTER, ROZSIKA, AND TIBI TALKED TO IRENE I DONT KNOW ABOUT WHAT.

ON ARRIVING TO VIENNA WE WERE HOUSED IN THE ROTSHIELD (SP?) HOSPITAL. WE WERE ISSUED FOOD STAMPS, AND TICKETS TO A LUXURIOUS PUBLIC BATH, WHICH WAS VERY CLOSE. IRENE AND I SPENT AN HOUR SOAKING OURSELVES IN THE WARM WATER OF THE BATHHOUSE. WHEN WE RETURNED TO THE HOSPITAL THE BOYS WERE WAITING FOR US WITH TICKETS TO THE OPERA. THE BOYS GAVE IRENE AND ME THE BOX TICKETS, THEY HAD ONLY TWO OF THOSE. THEY SAT SEPARATELY FROM US. WE ENJOYED THE LUXURY AND THE OPERA WHICH WAS A FIRST FOR ME HAVING COME FROM A VILLAGE. I HAVE HEARD THE LA BOHEME BEFORE ON THE RADIO, BUT THIS WAS A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE, TO BE RIGHT THERE WHERE IT WAS PLAYED. THE BOYS CAME BACK WITH TWO NEW TICKETS NEXT DAY TO THE MADAME BUTTERFLY, AND WE WENT TO THE OPERA AGAIN.

MATYI HAD A HABIT OF PINCHING PEOPLE, I MEAN GIRLS. HE PINCHED IN THE FACE, UPPER ARM. IT WAS VERY PAINFUL BUT ONE COULD NOT AVOID IT, BECAUSE ONE DID NOT KNOW IT WAS COMING. AFTER MATYI PINCHING ME THE SECOND TIME NOT HEEDING MY FIRST WARNING, I TOLD HIM IN A WAY HE UNDERSTOOD I AM SERIOUS, THAT I DID NOT APPRICIATE HIS KIND OF "FUN" AND THAT HE SHOULD TRY IT ON SOMEONE ELSE, MAYBE THEY WILL LIKE IT. HE LOOKED AT ME AMAZED AND ACTUALLY STEPPED CLOSE TO IRENE AND PINCHED HER. IN HER PAIN SHE SHOUTED AT HIM, " LEAVE ME ALONE"!!! TO WHICH MATYI REPLIED " ONE OF THESE DAYS YOU WILL COME TO ME BEGGING, DONT LEAVE ME ALONE". I DONT THINK IT EVER HAPPENED.

IRENE AND I WAS PUT IN A TRANSPORT HEADING FOR THE NEXT STATION. MATYI AND TIBI WERE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS GROUP.

WHEN WE WERE ON THE WAY I TOLD IRENE THAT I WAS HAPPY THAT THE BOYS DID NOT MAKE IT, BECAUSE WHEN I SAW MATYI I HAD A FEELING OF FORBODING. I HAD A VOICE IN MY HEAD SAYING THAT "HE IS YOUR HUSBAND" I DID NOT WANT THAT!!!! IRENE WAS SURPRISED TO HEAR IT BECAUSE MATYI WAS A VERY GOOD LOOKING, INTELLIGENT YOUNG MAN. IRENE ASKED ME "WHY DONT YOU LIKE HIM?". "IT IS NOT THAT I DONT LIKE HIM, I DO, I AM ATTRACTED TO HIM, BUT I DONT KNOW...IT IS A FEELING, A WARNING". "NOW YOU DONT HAVE TO WORRY ANY MORE, YOU MIGHT NEVER SEE

HIM AGAIN " IRENE TOLD ME. " THAT MIGHT BE TRUE" I SAID.

A FEW MONTHS LATER, ALREADY IN POCKING WHEN I OPENED THE WINDOWS, A STRANGE PICTURE CAUGHT MY EYES. THERE WAS A PERSON SITTING ON THE FOUNDATION OF A HOUSE, THAT WAS NEVER BUILT, DARNING SOCKS. HE WAS A VERY THIN VERSION OF MATYI. AS IF THIS WAS NOT STRANGE ENOUGH, THERE WERE FOUR YOUNG GOOSLINGS BESIDE HIM ON THE GRASS , GRAZING. AND THERE WAS A PAPER BOX. I WAS VERY SURPRISED HOW HE LOOKED, AND CALLED OUT, "GOOD MORNING, HOW ARE YOU?".

HE WAS SURPRISED TO SEE ME ALSO AND SAID "I AM NOT WELL". I WALKED OUT OF THE HOUSE AND SAT DOWN BESIDE HIM. " WHAT IS THE PROBLEM?" I ASKED. "I CANNOT EAT, MY MOUTH IS IN SHREDS" HE SAID. "WHAT DO YOU MEAN?". "IT IS VERY PAINFUL". I REMEMBERED MY MOM. WHEN THERE WAS A PROBLEM SHE WOULD SAY "LETS SEE WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT IT?". (MY YOUNGER DAUGHTER IS PRACTICING SOLUTION FOCUSED PSYCHOTHERAPY) SO THAT IS WHAT I ASKED HIM. HE KNEW THE ANSWER. " THERE IS NOTHING THAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT". THIS SAYING BECAME A CLASSIC THAT HE OFTEN REPEATED. I WAS CONCERNED AND TOLD HIM I WILL FIX SOME SOFT FOOD FOR HIM HE SHOULD COME WITH ME.. BUT HE COULD NOT LEAVE THE GOOSLINGS HE WAS GOOSLINGSITTING FOR....SO I PICKED THEM UP ONE BY ONE, PUT THEM IN THE BOX AND SAID "THERE, HERE WE GO", I TOOK THE BOX, AND HE WAS HOLDING THE SOCKS HE WAS DARNING.

WE WENT TO "MY ROOM", I PUT THE BOX ON THE WINDOW SILL AND STARTED TO MIX EGGS, BITS OF ~~CHEESE~~, MILK, AND I STARTED TO COOK IT, AND WHEN THE CHEESE MELTED I PUT IT INFRONT OF HIM. "EAT" I SAID. MATYI PUT TINY PIECES IN HIS MOUTH, AND WHEN HE TASTED HOW GOOD IT WAS HE FINISHED IT ALL. HIS COLOR SEEMED TO IMPROVE FROM EATING.

HE WENT BACK TO HIS PLACE TAKING THE BOX WITH HIM, AND I WENT TO LOOK FOR THE INTERN DENTIST, I DANCED THE NIGHT BEFORE ^{WITH} AT THE SPORT CLUB. I ASKED HIM WHAT COULD BE DONE FOR MATYI'S MOUTH.

IT WILL HAVE TO BE DISINFECTED HE SAID, AND THE BAD PARTS CLEANED OUT. NEXT DAY I WENT TO SEE HOW MATYI WAS DOING, AND TOLD HIM TO GO AND SEE A DENTIST. AT THE WORD "DENTIST" HE LOST THE LITTLE COLOR HE STILL HAD ON HIS FACE. HE LOOKED TERRIFIED, AND I DID NOT PRESS IT. AFTER A WHILE I SAID "LETS GO FOR A WALK". FORTUNATELY THE STUDENT DENTIST LIVED IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION FROM THE MEDICAL BUILDINGS. I GUIDED MATYI WITHOUT HIM SUSPECTING ANYTHING. WHEN WE GOT TO THE PLACE, I SAID "LETS VISIT A FRIEND OF MINE HERE", AND WE WENT INTO THE HOUSE.. I KNOCKED ON THE DOOR. THE DENTIST STUDENT OPENED IT AND INVITED US IN. I TURNED TO MATYI AND SAID, "SORRY I HAD TO TRICK YOU, BUT YOU WOULD HAVE NEVER COME DID I TELL YOU". HE IS GOING TO LOOK AT THE PROBLEM, OPEN YOUR MOUTH". AND WHEN HE DID OPEN HIS MOUTH, THAT IS WHEN I SAW IT. THE SKIN WAS

HANGING IN SHREDS. THERE WAS NO HEALTHY SKIN IN HIS MOUTH. THE GUMS WERE A GREY MESS. TERRIBLE.....

THE DENTIST STARTED TO WORK ON IT WITH COTTON SWABS DIPPED IN DISINFECTANT OF SOME KIND, AND TOLD MATYI TO COME BACK EVERY OTHER DAY FOR MORE TREATMENTS. IT WAS I WHO SAID THAT WE SURELY WILL.

I WAS CERTAIN THAT MATYI WILL GIVE ME HELL FOR TRICKING HIM. HE DID NOT SEEM TO MIND IT AT ALL, BUT I DID NOT THINK HE WILL GO BACK FOR MORE, IT WAS VERY PAINFUL, SO I WENT WITH HIM. AND HE WAS HEALED. IN THE MEANTIME I COOKED FOR HIM SOFT FOOD. WHEN HIS GUMS GOT WELL HE STARTED TO EAT NORMAL FOOD AND RECOVERING HIS STRENGTH HE LOOKED WELL AGAIN. THIS IS HOW A FRIENDSHIP BEGAN TO UNFOLD BETWEEN MATYI AND I.

WHILE THIS WAS HAPPENING TIBI DISCOVERED THAT IRENE LIVED THERE AND HE TOO STARTED TO STOP IN FOR VISITS.. BUT IRENE HAD A FEAR OF TIBI. HE WAS STILL VERY UNDERWEIGHT, AND THAT REMINDED HER OF THE INMATES OF EBENSEE.

NEW PEOPLE ARRIVED OCCASSIONALLY. ESCAPING FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES GOT HARDER AND HARDER. BUT ONE DAY TIBI'S BROTHER SHOWED UP IN POKING WITH HIS WIFE. MARGAROT LOOKED LIKE A MADONNA ON ANTIQUE PAINTINGS. ANDREW WAS AN OPERA SINGER OF A VERY RICH VOICE.

Dr. George Roretli in Pocking



Andrew The Singer

162.A



Pocking

Cantor and Mrs. Salzer
and Ari



Ari and Eva,
Mrs. Salzer



STOLASCIO

In Wilmington Del.

THEY CAME OVER TO VISIT US WITH TIBI AND MATYI. I ASKED ANDREW TO SING FOR US. HE LOOKED AT THE CEILING, AND AROUND THE ROOM AS IF HE WAS LOOKING FOR SOMETHING. IT PUZZLED ME, UNTIL HE OPENED HIS MOUTH AND MAGIC WAS FLOWING OUT OF IT. ONLY, THE ROOM WAS MUCH TOO SMALL FOR HIS VOICE.

THE COUPLE SPENT A SHORT TIME IN POCKING. THEY WERE ON THEIR WAY TO PARIS. THEY TOO WERE LOOKING FOR A COUNTRY WHERE THEY COULD GO TO SETTLE. TIBI AND ANDREW HAD AN UNCLE IN PARIS. HE WAS A BANKER, BUT DID NOT FEEL LIKE GETTING INVOLVED.

THERE WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GO TO HONDURAS AND AND THEY EMIGRATED THERE. TWO LOVELY BABIES WERE BORN TO THEM. AGI IS A TEACHER, EVA IS AN MD. NOT MUCH LATER EVA WAS BORN THEY CAME TO THE US. AND LIVED IN WILMINGTON, DELAWARE.

MATYI'S SISTER ELISABETH LIVED THERE. BY THAT TIME MARTIN AND I WAS ALSO THERE.

THINGS STARTED TO HAPPEN FOR THE SALZER FAMILY, AFTER THEY MET RABBI MULLER. ON A FRIDAY EVENING HE TOOK ANDREW TO A SMALL PRAYERHOUSE. RABBI MULLER ASKED THE PRESIDING RABBI TO LISTEN TO ANDREW AFTER THE SERVICE. WE WERE THERE. MOST OF THE CONGREGATION WERE ON THEIR WAY OUT. SOME OF THEM ALREADY ON THE STREET. WHEN ANDREW STARTED TO SING, ALL OF THEM TURNED AROUND AND CAME BACK TO LISTEN TO HIM.

ANDREW WAS HIRED ON THE SPOT AS A CANTOR. THE TEMPLE COULD NOT HANDLE THE LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO JOINED UP BECAUSE OF HIS VOICE. THEY HAD TO BUILD A VERY LARGE TEMPLE AND STILL MORE AND MORE CAME. ADDITIONAL ROOMS HAD TO BE OPENED FOR THE HOLIDAYS BECAUSE OF THE OVERFLOW. ANDREW AND MARGAROT WERE ~~ADORED~~, HE WAS INVITED TO DIFFERENT OCCASSIONS TO GIVE CONCERT. PARTIES WERE GIVEN IN THEIR HONOR. ENGRAVED SILVER DISHES AND BEAUTIFUL CRISTALS WERE GIVEN TO THEM IN GRATITUDE. PEOPLE FILLED THE TEMPLE JUST TO LISTEN TO ANDREW'S VOICE, UNTIL HE RETIRED.

MARGAROT AND ANDREW LIVE NOW IN FLORIDA. THEY ARE VERY POPULAR WITH HER CHARMING PERSONALITY AND HIS POSITIVE ATTITUDE.

WE KEEP IN TOUCH, AND ARE STILL FRIENDS. IN MARGAROT I FOUND RIGHT AWAY A WONDERFUL GIRLFRIEND, AND ANDREW HELPED ME TO REINFORCE MY ALREADY POSITIVE WAY OF THINKING.

I USED TO BABYSIT FOR AGI AND EVA AT TIMES, AND IT GAVE ME A LOT OF PLEASURE. WHEN I HAD MY CHILDREN, JULIE AND DEBBIE, THEY WERE FRIENDS BEFORE WE MOVED TO CALIFORNIA.

STILL IN POCKING, ONE EVENING THERE WAS A KNOCK ON MATYI'S DOOR AND WHEN HE OPENED IT HE SAW A MAN FROM GYONGYOS HIS HOME TOWN, STANDING IN THE DOORWAY. DR. GEORGE ROZETT WAS A LAWYER FROM WHERE MATYI GREW UP. I MET HIM LATER IN THE WEEK.

Dr. George Rorett + Family
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GEORGE WAS A REMARKABLE PERSON WITH A WONDERFUL PERSONALITY, AS I LEARNED DURING MY LONG FRIENDSHIP WITH HIM AND HIS NEW FAMILY.

DURING THE WAR HE WAS AN OFFICER IN THE ARMY, BECAUSE HIS FATHER WAS SOME KIND OF A HERO IN WWI. GEORGE WAS EXEMPT FROM JEWISH LAW. IN THE SECOND WW. HE WAS CAUGHT BY THE RUSSIANS AND WAS A PRISONER OF WAR FOR YEARS. WHEN HE RETURNED TO GYONGYOS, HE FOUND HIS BELOVED WIFE LIVING WITH ANOTHER MAN. (SHE DID NOT KNOW ABOUT GEORGE DURING THOSE YEARS.) HE COULD NOT STAY IN THE CITY AND STARTED TO WORK ON ESCAPING FROM HUNGARY. WHY ESCAPE? THERE WERE NO PASSPORTS TO BE HAD TO TRAVEL ANYWHERE FOR ANYONE, AFTER THE WAR OUT OF A COMMUNIST COUNTRY.

WHEN GEORGE ARRIVED TO VIENNA, HE HEARD FROM SOMEONE, THAT MATYI WAS IN POCKING. MATYI WAS VERY SURPRISED, BUT TOLD HIM HE COULD STAY WITH HIM IN HIS ROOM. HE HAD TWO COTS.

FROM THAT TIME ON MATYI WAS ENTERTAINED BY GEORGE'S RECITING THE MOST BEAUTIFUL POEMS FROM ONE OF THE BEST POETS OF HUNGARY, ADI ENDRE - IN THE DARK OF THE ROOM, BEFORE FALLING ASLEEP.

GEORGE WAS A VERY FRIENDLY AND PLEASANT PERSON. BUT HE, LIKE ALL OF US, WAS VERY IMPATIENT WITH THE "WAITING TO EMIGRATE" GAME, HE VOLUNTEERED TO GO TO BELGIUM, AND WORK IN THE COAL MINES. GEORGE PREFERRED THE COAL MINES, INSTEAD OF SITTING AROUND WAITING.

IT HAPPENED VERY FAST. GEORGE WAS GONE, AND HE WAS A MINER. WHEN HIS RELATIVES LEARNED ABOUT THIS IN THE USA. THEY SENT A GIRL NAMED THELMA TO MEET HIM. HE WAS SUPPOSED TO FALL IN LOVE WITH HER. WHICH HE DID. THEY GOT MARRIED AND MOVED TO NEW JERSEY WHERE THEY LIVE IN A LOVING RELATIONSHIP. THEY HAD TWO CHILDREN AND I DONT KNOW HOW MANY GRANDCHILDREN.

PALI FERENZY, AND ANNI, CALLED "CSIBE" WERE VERY CLOSE FRIENDS IN POCKING. PALI TALL, CSIBE A TINI GIRL. PALI BECAME RESTLESS, HE JUST HAD TO GO TO PARIS. IT WAS EASY. ONE JUST HAD TO WALK OVER THE BORDER AT NIGHT ILLEGALLY. MANY PEOPLE DID THAT. TRUE, SOME OF THEM WERE CAUGHT AND SENT BACK. A FEW NIGHTS LATER THEY WERE AT IT AGAIN AND WERE SUCCESSFUL. THE DENES FAMILY WENT LEGALLY TO PARIS, BUT TIBI SALZER AND THE YOUNG COUPLE MATYI LIVED WITH IN THE BEGINNING, (AND WAS GOOSLING SITTING FOR) EVA AND PISTA ALMASY ALSO WENT ILLEGALLY.. AND FROM THERE THEY WENT TO CUBA LIKE THE DENES FAMILY. THEY ENDED UP IN NEW JERSEY. THE ALMASY¹S HAD A DAUGHTER ZSUZSIKA, WHO IS A TALENTED MUSICIAN.

LATER EVA DIVORCED PISTA. POOR PISTA ENDED UP WITH A YOUNG ORIENTAL BEAUTY. THEY HAD A BABY IN NINETY THREE, WHEN HE WAS SIXTY SIX, I THINK.

PALI FERENZY WAS NOT VERY LONG IN PARIS, WHEN HE STARTED TO MISS CSIBE. HE WENT BACK TO POCKING, AND LATER THEY TOOK THE SAME " TRIP " WITH ME TO ITALY. FROM ITALY THEY EMIGRATED TO RIO DE JANEIRO . A SON WAS BORN TO THEM.

WHEN TIBI AND MATYI ARRIVED IN POCKING THEY LIVED IN A LARGE ROOM WITH A NUMBER OF PEOPLE. WHEN THEY WERE AT HOME, TIBI AND MATYI AMUSED THEMSELVES WITH THE ART OF ARGUING, FOR THE SAKE OF IT. TROWING KNIVES INTO POTATOES WAS ANOTHER WAY, AND GIVING EACH OTHER FOREHEAD SLAPS, WHILE ANNOUNCING "FOREHEAD SLAP". THEY THOUGHT IT TO BE A LOT OF FUN BECAUSE THE PERSON GETTING THE SLAP WAS STUNNED. MATYI TRIED IT ON ME AND I DEFINITELY DID NOT TAKE TO IT. IT SURPRISED HIM. I DID NOT LIKE TO BE PINCHED. I DID NOT LIKE TO BE TICKLED, AND I DID NOT LIKE FOREHEAD SLAPS. WHAT DID I LIKE????? THE BOYS ALSO PLAYED WORD GAMES NAMED " BAR KOCHBA" IF I HEARD IT RIGHT.

WHEN I HAVE NOT SEEN MATYI FOR A WHILE, I WAS WONDERING HOW HE WAS HEALTHWISE. I WENT TO SEE HIM IN HIS OFFICE. HE WAS NOT THERE. VERA NADAS TOLD ME THAT HE WAS TAKEN TO PASSAU HOSPITAL TWO DAYS BEFORE WITH THE AMBULANCE. I TOOK THE NEXT TRAIN TO PASSAU.

I FOUND HIM IN THE HOSPITAL, BUT DID NOT RECOGNIZE HIM. HIS HEAD WAS SWOLLEN TO AN INCREDIBLE SIZE, AND IT WAS VERY SCARY."

THE DOCTORS WERE NOT AWARE WHAT THE PROBLEM WAS, AND SUSPECTING A TOOTH, THEY PULLED OUT ONE. IT TOOK TIME FOR HIS HEAD TO SHRINK BACK TO NORMAL SIZE, BUT IT DID. A FEW WEEKS LATER THE AMBULANCE HAD TO PICK HIM UP AGAIN, FOR THE SAME REASON. THE DOCTORS PULLED A FEW MORE OF HIS TEETH. IT WAS VERY DEPRESSING FOR ME, AND AN OTHER THING WAS BOTHERING ME. TO MY DISMAY, NO ONE CAME TO VISIT HIM WHEN HE WAS IN THE HOSPITAL.

MATYI HAD RELATIONS IN AMERICA. THAT IS WHERE HE WANTED TO GO, TO HIS TWO BROTHERS AND 3 SISTERS. MATYI WROTE ABOUT ME TO HIS SISTER ELIZABETH.. SHE ANSWERED RIGHT AWAY, THAT SHOULD HE GET MARRIED, SHE HOPES HE WILL FIND A PLACE TO EMIGRATE. I DONT KNOW WHAT MATYI WROTE TO HER BUT ANYWAY I WAS NOT GOING TO ANYWHERE BUT ISRAEL. HE SHOWED ME THIS LETTER AND I WENT TO REGISTER AGAIN AND INSISTED I WILL BE IN THE NEXT TRANSPORT TO GO TO ISRAEL VIA ITALY..

THE FOLLOWING WEEK STARTED IT ROLLING FOR ME. IT WAS A GROUP TRIP TO ITALY!!!!!! OUR FIRST TRIP WAS TO INSBRUCK. WE SPENT A FEW DAYS THERE WAITING FOR A DAY WHEN WE CAN WALK TROU⁶H THE PASS SECRETLY.

INSBRUCK HAS A VERY BEAUTIFUL SETTING. THE BORDERING SWISS MOUNTAINS SNOW COVERED PEAKS REFLECTING THE SUNSHINE TO THE VALLEY BELOW. THE MELTING SNOW COMING DOWN THE SLOPES CREATING A CRISTAL

CLEAR RIVER CLOSE TO OUR CAMP. THERE WAS LUSH GREENERY ALL AROUND.

A FEW DAYS LATER OUR GROUP OF THREE HUNDRED WERE TAKEN OUT AT NIGHT ON ARMY TRUCKS, BUT BEFORE WE STARTED, WE WERE INSTRUCTED NOT TO TAKE ANYTHING WITH US, NOT TO TROW THE SMALLEST OBJECT AWAY ON OUR CLIMB, BECAUSE IF THE BORDER PATROL WILL FIND ANYTHING, THEY WILL WATCH THE ROUTE AND IT WILL BE LOST FOR THE GROUPS TO COME AFTER US. WE WERE NOT ALLOWED TO CARRY ANYTHING IN OUR HANDS. ~~THESE~~ THOSE WERE NEEDED ON DIFFICULT TERRAINES.

WE WERE DRIVEN UP THE MOUNTAINS FOR A DISTANCE, THE TRUCKS STOPPED, AND WE WERE LED INTO THE WOODS AWAY FROM THE ROAD.

IT WAS THE MOST ENJOYABLE TRIP OF MY LIFE UP TO THAT POINT. IT WAS ALSO THE MOST DIFFICULT ROADS, BUT THE JOY OVERRODE ALL OTHER FEELINGS..... ON THE LOWER SLOPES LIGHT BREEZE WAS BLOWING PLEASANTLY. THE FLUTTERING OF THE FIREFLIES ADDED TO THE LIGHTHEARTED ATMOSPHERA OF A PEOPLE GOING HOME.

THE SKIES WERE SWARMING WITH STARS, AND THE AIR WAS FULL OF RESTLESSNESS OF THE SPRING. LATER A SUDDEN STORM CAME, LEAVING US WITH THE FRAGRANCE OF THE PINE. THE MELTING SNOW CHIRPED AS IT FORMED RIVULETS RUSHING AT OUR FEET

THE GROUP PUSHED ON ENCOURAGED BY THE LEADERS, WHO GOT HOLD OF THE SLOWER PEOPLE'S HAND, GIVING AN EXAMPLE TO OTHERS.

FOR ALL CONCERNED, IT WAS A DELIGHTFUL ADVENTURE IN THE LIFE OF A PEOPLE. THIS WAS NOT AN ORDINARY HAPPENING IN THE LIFE OF A PERSON WHO LEADS A NORMAL LIFE, IN NORMAL TIMES. IT WAS A COMBINATION OF WHAT WAS ACTUALLY HAPPENING AND THE SUSPENSE THAT WAS PART OF THE ADVENTURE OF A PEOPLE GOING HOME AFTER THE TERRORS OF THE RECENT WAR.

WE HAD NO DOUBTS THAT THERE WAS A HOME WAITING FOR US.

THESE TRIPS WERE ORGANIZED BY THE JEWISH UNDERGROUND FROM PALESTINE.. THEIR WORK WAS TO ARRANGE AND BRING OUT THE REMAINING JEWS FROM EUROPE LIKE THE REST^x IN HUNGARY AND POLAND AND SLOVAKIA (CHEHOSLOVAKIA). MANY OF THE ISRAELY GROUP SERVED IN THE BRITISH ARMY DURING THE WAR, AND STILL HAD THE UNIFORMS ON. THEY WERE DEDICATED TO THIS CAUSE, FOR WHOEVER KNEW WHAT HAPPENED TO US IN THE PAST YEARS WAS ANXIOUS TO HELP US TO ATTAIN OUR GOALS.

THE ORGANIZERS LED THESE GROUPS TROUGH THE MOUNTAINS BESIDE THE ROADS OF THE BRENNER PASS AND GOING DOWN THE OTHER SIDE, FAR ENOUGH FOR THE PATROL NOT TO NOTICE THE MOVEMENTS OF THE GROUP.

AT ONE POINT CROSSING THE FRENCH ZONE OUR GROUP LEADER HAD TO PAY TEN DOLLARS FOR EACH OF US PASSING THROUGH. THE FRENCH BORDER PATROL COUNTING US OFF. THIS WAS A BRIBE FOR PASSING THROUGH. NOT OFFICIAL BUSINESS. THREE HUNDRED JUST IN THIS GROUP. IN FORTY SEVEN , IN FRANCE, ONE COULD BUY A VERY LARGE HOME FOR THIS MONEY.

x worked

WE WERE IN ITALY!!!!!! A NUMBER OF ARMY TRUCKS WERE WAITING FOR US. WE WERE GIVEN MORE INSTRUCTION. IF ANYONE ASKING US OF OUR ORIGIN, WE WERE FROM "YUGOSLAV OCCUPIED ZONE". THE TRUCKS WERE COVERED TIGHT, AND WE WERE RECHECKED FOR ANY SHARP OBJECT THAT COULD SPLIT THE CANVASS OF THE TRUCKS FOR LACK OF AIR WE WERE VERY TIGHTLY PACKED, STANDING UP. AND WE WERE DRIVEN OFF IN THE STILL HALF DARK OF THE IMPENDING SUNRISE IN THE EAST.

JUST BEFORE COMO LA GARDA THE COVERS CAME OFF AND PARADISE APPEARED. ORANGES WERE BOUGHT FOR US.. WE DID NOT SEE ORANGES FOR YEARS. THERE WAS NO EXPORT OF CITRUS FRUITS TO THE COUNTRIES IN WAR.

NONE OF US HAD A PENNY, OUR POSSESSION WAS THE DRESS WE HAD ON OUR BACK. JUST THE SAME WE TRAVELED THE ROADS OF THE RICHEST TOURISTS, DOWNHILL AND AROUND THE LAKE, UNDER THE ARCADES. WE SAW COMO IN A FANTASTIC SETTING. TOSCANINI USED TO LIVE THERE HE COULD NOT FIND A MORE ENCHANTING PLACE TO LIVE.

SOON WE WERE IN MILANO. IN MILANO THE SWISS RED CROSS GAVE US NEW I.D. PAPERS WITH OUR REAL NAMES, AND WHO WAS WHO AGAIN.

I LOVED ITALY. IT WAS ONE OF THE COUNTRIES I WANTED TO VISIT, EVEN WHEN I WAS A CHILD. (THE OTHER WAS HAWAII)

I WAS ALWAYS VERY IMPRESSED BY THE ITALIAN MUSIC'S INTENSITY, THAT I HEARD NOT ONLY ON THE RADIO, BUT ALSO FROM MY FATHER WHO SANG, THE

HE WAS A WARPRISONER IN ITALY FOR A SHORT TIME. HE ESCAPED SWIMMING TROUGH THE ARNO RIVER.

YVONNE WAS MY CLIMBING COMPANION TO ITALY. SHE WAS A VERY BEAUTIFUL PERSON, WITH A PEACH COMPLEXION. LATER WE ENJOYED GOING TOGETHER TO PLACES. SHE SPOKE SEVERAL LANGUAGES, AMONG WHICH, ITALIAN.

WHEN SHE WAS LIBERATED FROM AUSCHWITZ SHE WAS A HEARTBROKEN PERSON EVEN BEFORE SHE LEARNED WHAT HAPPENED TO HER FAMILY.

AT THE TIME OF LIBERATION SHE WAS STILL TOGETHER WITH HER YOUNGER SISTER SHE LOVED VERY MUCH. IN FORTYFOUR, THE WINTER OF AUSCHWITZ WAS VERY COLD. HEAVY SNOW COVERED THE GROUNDS OF THE CAMP.

RIGHT AFTER THE LIBERATION SHE AND HER SISTER GOT HOLD OF A SMALL EMPTY ROOM WITH A BELLY STOVE.. SINCE THERE WAS NO CHIMNEY THE PIPE WAS PUT TROUGH THE WINDOW TO CARRY THE SMOKE OUT. THEY DID NOT HAVE YET TO BURN WOOD IN IT THOUGH. A RUSSIAN SOLDIER MISTOOK IT FOR A LARGE ARTILLERY GUN AND THREW A HAND GRENADE THROUGH THE WINDOW. IT LANDED ON YVONNE'S SISTER'S BODY WHEN IT BLEW UP. YVONNE WAS DESPARATE. THERE WAS NO ONE AROUND TO HELP HER. SHE WAS CARRYING HER SISTER AROUND TRYING TO FIND SOMEONE.

HER SISTER DIED IN HER ARMS. SHE COULD NOT FIND ANYONE.

LIKE ZOLI, SHE TOO WAS TAKEN TO RUSSIA AND WAS KEPT AS A POLITICAL PRISONER, UNTIL THE RUSSIANS DECIDED THAT THEY DID NOT BELONG THERE AND LET THEM GO.

IN THE EYES OF THE RUSSIANS, ALL WAR PRISONERS WERE TRAITORS. A RUSSIAN SOLDIER COULD NOT BECOME A PRISONER OF THE ENEMY AND STILL LIVE. THAT WAS THE MILITARY LAW, I HEARD. THE RUSSIAN LIBERATORS DID NOT INVESTIGATE RIGHT AWAY WHY WERE THOSE PRISONERS IN AUSCHWITZ. ONLY THE WEST KNEW IT.

IN THE CAMP WHERE YVONNE WAS, THERE WERE ALSO ITALIANS. YVONNE AND AN ITALIAN GENTLEMAN BECAME FRIENDS. HE WAS FROM VENICE AND WAS A JEWELLER BEFORE THE WAR. THEY HAD PLENTY OF TIME IN CAMP AND YVONNE STARTED TO STUDY THE ITALIAN LANGUAGE FROM HIM. I THINK IT WAS HER SIXTH LANGUAGE. WHEN WE CAME OVER FROM INSBRUCK AND ALREADY WERE IN ITALY, YVONNE WAS DELIGHTED TO DISCOVER A ROAD SIGN. SHE TRANSLATED TO ME. SHE SAID, "ROAD BUILDING AHAED" AND HER RADIANT SMILE SAID "SEE I UNDERSTAND". WE BURST OUT LAUGHING.....

IN THE SUBURBS OF MILANO, IN ADRIATICA BICOCCA WE LIVED IN THE ARMY BARRACKS. IT WAS FULLER THAN FULL. THERE WAS NO PLACE TO BE HAD IN THE LIVING QUARTERS. I WAS REFERRED TO WHERE THE HORSES LIVED BEFORE. IT WAS A LARGE BUILDING WITH CONCRETE WALLS AND FLOORS.

THE OUTSIDE OF THE BUILDING WAS COVERED WITH TINY LEAFED CLIMBERS. AMONG THE LEAVES SLENDER NEWTS SUNNED THEMSELVES. AS I WENT CLOSER TO LOOK, THEY DID NOT GET SCARED AND RUN AWAY.

ONCE INSIDE IT DID NOT LOOK THAT CHEERFUL. THE SMALL WINDOWS WERE PLACED JUST SOMEWHAT UNDER THE CEILLING. THEY DID NOT WANT THE HORSES TO LOOK OUT AND ENJOY THE TRAMONTA.(SPELLING?)

A FEW WEAK LIGHTBULBS WERE HANGING FROM NAKED WIRES FROM THE CEILLING, GIVING DIM LIGHT IN THE EVENING. THEY DID NOT WANT US TO READ AT NIGHT. THE FLOORPLACE WAS DIVIDED BY VERY FLIMSY, PAPER LIKE WALLS, ABOUT SIX FEET HIGH. THE REST OF THE SPACE WAS MUTUAL OVERHEAD..

MY SPACE WAS FURTHER DEVIDED FOR TWO OTHER PERSONS. TWO YOUNG MAN LIVED THERE FOR A SHORT TIME. MY DEVIDER WAS A TWO PIECE CURTAIN MATERIAL WITH A ZIPPER IN THE MIDDLE FOR A DOOR.

ONE HAS TO BE A HUNGARIAN TO UNDERSTAND THIS JOKE, THAT I MADE.

IN HUNGARY WHEN SOMEONE LEAVES THE DOOR OPEN AFTER HIMSELF, HE WAS ASKED " DO YOU PEOPLE HAVE AUTOMATED ZIPPER DOOR WHERE YOU LIVE?"

THESE CIRCUMSTANCES DID NOT OFFER TOO MUCH PRIVACY FOR ANYBODY. FORTY PEOPLE LIVED IN THIS PLACE.. THERE WERE A FEW YOUNG COUPLES LIVING THERE.

ONE DAY UNKNOWN TO ME, MY BED AND THE FERENZY'S BED WAS PUSHED TOGETHER WITH THE DEVIDING WALL COVERING IT UP IN BETWEEN.

I WAS DREAMING DURING THE NIGHT, THAT I WAS TRAVELING ON MY DREAMBOAT, THAT WAS TAKING ME TO ISRAEL. THE BOAT WAS ROCKED BY THE WAVES OF THE MEDITERRANIAN SEA. ALL OF A SUDDEN THE BOAT CAPSIZED ON A SANDBANK, WAKING ME UP AS IT DID. THAT MUCH FOR PRIVACY.

WHEN I TOOK THE BUS FROM ADRIATICA BICOCCA, I GOT OFF AT THE STATUE OF GARIBALDI IN MILANO. ON THAT AREA THE PAVEMENT WAS MADE OF PIRELLI RUBBER. NOT FAR FROM THE STATUE WAS THE BUILDING THAT HOUSED THE "LAST SUPPER " WALLPAINTING.

VIA GARIBALDI TOOK ME TO THE FAMED DUOMO OF MILANO. WALKING TOWARD IT -I THINK-ON THE FIRST CORNER WAS ANOTHER FAMOUS PLACE, CALLED " MOTTA ". THEY SOLD THE BEST ICE CREAM ON EARTH ESPECIALLY IF ONE COULD NOT HAVE ICE CREAM FOR YEARS BEFORE.

MOTTARELLO , ONE OF THEIR CONCOCTIONS , WAS OUT OF THIS WORLD. THAT WORLD.



"Motta"

THE BUS STOP AT THE GARIBALDI STATUE IN MILANO



going to "Motta"
with the Ferenzis

ON A BEAUTIFUL SUMMER AFTERNOON THE FERENZIS AND I WENT TO TOWN. PALI HAD THE IDEA THAT WE STOP AT MOTTA AND HAVE AN ICE CREAM. I THOUGHT HE HAD MONEY FOR IT, SINCE HE INVITED ME. SO DID HE UNTIL HE GOT THE CHECK. PALI LEFT CSIBE AND ME THERE AND WENT TO GET SOME MONEY, WE DID NOT KNOW WHERE.

WE WERE SITTING AND WAITING FOR HIM TO SHOW UP, AND WAITING AND GETTING SCARED, THAT HE WILL NOT COME BACK FOR US. AFTER A REAL LONG TIME HE FINALLY APPEARED, LOOKING HAPPY, THAT HE WAS ABLE TO RANSOM US. THE ICE CREAM WAS SOOO DELICIOUS!!!!

ITALY WAS A DREAM FOR ME IN EVERY RESPECT. THE FLOWERING ALMOND TREES KEPT THE AIR SWEET AND ROMANTIC. THE CITRUS FRUITS THAT WERE EXPORTED TO NORTHERN COUNTRIES CAME FROM ITALY AND SOME FRUIT LIKE FIGS FROM THE ARAB COUNTRIES. HAVING COME FROM HUNGARY AND GERMANY WHERE FOOD WAS SCARCE AND RATIONED, THE DISPLAYS OF THE SHOP WINDOWS WERE IRRESISTIBLY FULL OF THE MOST DELICIOUS DELICACIES, THAT I DID NOT SEE FOR YEARS, AND OF COURSE NOW I DID NOT HAVE THE MONEY TO BUY. I WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO WORK, BUT IT WAS AGAINST THE LAW. ITALY WAS FULL OF JUBLESS WORKERS, AND WERE STARVING. AND THEY WISHED MUSSOLINI WAS STILL AROUND AND THEY ALL HAD JOBS.

WALKING ON, IN THE DIRECTION OF THE DUOMO, AND LOOKING AT THE SHOP WINDOWS FULL OF GORGEOUS MATERIALS AND READY TO WEAR MADE ME DIZZY.

I HAD ONE AND ONLY ONE SUMMER DRESS THAT I WASHED IN THE EVENING AND PUT IT ON IN THE MORNING.

ON THE NEXT STREETCORNER I COULD SEE COFFEE BEANS BEING ROASTED TO DIFFERENT SHADES ON THE ~~EVERTURNING~~ HOT WHEEL. THE FANTASTIC AROMA OF THE COFFEE IN THE AIR WAS FLOATING TOWARD THE LACE OF THE DUOMO INFRONT OF ME. I WAS STILL GIDDY FROM THE COFFEE SMELL WHEN I ARRIVED IN FRONT OF THE CHEESE SHOP. AND I WAS HUNGRY.

THE CAMP LIFE WAS PRETTY DEPRESSING, SINCE I STILL DID NOT KNOW WHEN CAN I GO TO ISRAEL. TO MAKE THE WAITING EASIER I SPENT AS MUCH TIME OUT OF THE CAMP AS I COULD AFFORD. (CAR FARE) OTHERS MUST HAVE BEEN TROUBLED FROM THIS INSECURITY AND A FIGHT STARTED BETWEEN TWO MEN. WHEN ONE OF THEM PULLED A KNIFE, THOSE STANDING AROUND WERE SHOCKED AND SURPRISED. KNIFE???? BOOTHS????? THE BOOTHS WERE COVERED BY THE SLACKS, BUT WHEN HE PULLED HIS KNIFE THE RUSSIAN ARMY BOOTHS WERE DISCOVERED. HE WAS NOT JEWISH.

ALL THE D.P. CAMPS WERE SEGREGATED FOR SECURITY REASONS. IF THE CAMPS WERE MIXED ANY GERMAN WARCriminal COULD HIDE IN CAMPS LIKE THIS RUSSIAN DID. JEWS DID NOT WEAR KNIVES AND DID NOT TRY TO KILL JEWS. WE HAVE HAD IT. THIS HAPPENED RIGHT AFTER THE HOLOCAUST. THIS MAN POSED FOR A JEW, BUT WE LEARNED A FEW THINGS FROM THE GERMANS. ONE OF THEM WAS HOW TO IDENTIFY A JEW.

THERE WAS A SIDESTREET CLOSE TO THE VIA GARIBALDI, WHERE THE NEWCOMERS WERE REGISTERED FOR I.D. S. THE PLACE WAS VIA UNIONE 5. THAT WAS WHERE MATYI AND I GOT OUT JEWISH MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE IN THE RABBI'S OFFICE. MY NEW HUSBAND PREDICTED RIGHT THERE THAT I WILL BECOME A BIG FAT JEWISH WOMEN. HE COULD ALWAYS SURPRISE ME.....

I OFTEN WENT TO LOOK THERE AT THE NEWS THAT NEW TRANSPORT ARRIVED, IN THE HOPE OF FINDING SOMEONE FROM MY PAST. I WAS REWARDED WHEN I FOUND TWO SISTERS WHO WERE LIBERATED WITH ME IN LENZING.

IT WAS SUCH HAPPINESS TO SEE THOSE (SKELETON - LIKE NOT LONG AGO) GIRLS LOOKING HEALTHY AND PLUMP. THEY WORKED IN THE FACTORY, BUT AT A DIFFERENT PLACE.

WHILE LIVING IN MILANO'S SUBURB, THERE CAME A POLITICAL UPHEAVAL IN ITALY. THERE WERE A LOT OF COMMUNISTS WHO WANTED POWER.

THE CITY WAS SCARED OF US, HAVING COME FROM COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. WE COULD AS WELL BE INFILTRATORS, THEY MUST HAVE THOUGHT, TO SPREAD THE IDEOLOGY. IT DID NOT TAKE TOO LONG THAT WE WERE TRANSFERRED TO THE VILLAGE OF TRANI. WE LIVED THERE IN THE SAME KIND OF SOLDIERS BARRACKS, BUT WITH MORE SPACE. WE HAD JUST FOUR PEOPLE TO A ROOM. OUR ROOM MATES WERE THE FERENZIS.

TRANI WAS A SLEEPING VILLAGE FULL OF POVERTY. IT WAS A DAILY

HAPPENING THAT WE SAW A BABY BEING CARRIED TO THE CEMETERY ON THE SHOULDERS OF THE RELATIVES..... THE MOTHER HAD NO NOURISHMENT AND COULD NOT FEED THE BABY. IT WAS A HEARTBREAKING SIGHT FOR US, WHO WERE ALSO DEPENDENT ON FOOD GIVEN TO US. IT WAS NOT A PLEASANT AFFAIR. AS IT WAS LEARNED LATER WE DID NOT GET THE KIND OF FOOD THAT WAS PAID FOR BY THE CHARITY ORGANIZATIONS. WE GOT THE CHEEPEST WORST QUALITY INSTEAD, UNTIL THE PEOPLE WHO STOLE THE MONEY HAD TO APPEAR IN COURT. BY THAT TIME WE WERE NOT IN TRANI.

IN TRANI, BESIDES HAVING RANCID MILK FROM MILK POWDER NAMED " KLIM" FOR BREAKFAST AND SPAGETTI OR POTATOES FOR LUNCH AND DINNER, WE ALSO HAD A BEAUTIFUL SEASHORE LOVELY CLEAN AIR, STARFILLED NIGHTS AND OUR HOPES THAT ONE OF THESE DAYS IN THE NOT TOO FAR FUTURE, WE WILL BE ABLE TO LIVE A NORMAL LIFE, THAT IT WAS A MIRACLE WE STILL REMEMBERED, AFTER SPENDING SO MANY YEARS IN CAMPS.

ON HOT DAYS WE WENT TO THE BEACH TO ENJOY THE COOL BREEZE AND THE MURMUR OF THE ROLLING WAVES. WHILE SITTING ON THE SHORE TINY SALT PARTICLES SETTLED ALL OVER US AND GAVE US THE TASTE OF PURE OCEAN SALT WHEN LICKING OUR LIPS.

SOMETIMES WE RENTED THOSE DOUBLE BOATS WITH ROLLING SEATS. I ENJOYED ROWING ONCE MORE, AFTER SO MANY YEARS PASSED FROM THE TIME I LEARNED TO ROW ON THE RIVER ZAGYVA IN JASZBERENY.. IT WAS SO MUCH

Monika + Arkane.



Eda and grandchildren



Eda's Family

In Trani Eda's Mom
Eda and I.



Eda's Daughter + Grandchildren



Niki in Trani



Yvonne Clement



In Trani

26 Chowringhee,
Calcutta, June 18. 1954.

UN. AMBASSADOR:
DELEGATE

Good morning, Julia Catherine. I have waited to hear of you for almost five years. Magda and Martin promised to write me when you came along and no one is more delighted to hear of you three than I am. Don't forget I am your grand uncle and have been so for a number of years when I met your parents at Trani and then were together again in Naples and then we lost touch of each other until you came along and now I am happy.

Valerie could not let me have your address and at odd moments during these years I have wondered where you two were and how was upholstering doing. I had given up all hopes of ever hearing of you and imagine my great joy and surprise at getting this note. If I were near you, I should be there at what Christians called a Christening but I am many seas away and can only send you my fond love and good wishes.

Well, dear Magda, how are you with your blond curls, Have still a large photograph of you and a small snap of Martin, the next one you must send me must be of all the three of you. The address you have is my father's but if you write there the letters will reach me. A few days after my return in January 1950, I was posted to Calcutta to deal with the B. Bengal refugees and I am still doing the same but now as Controller, giving loans to refugees to start business or small industries. Frankly, I am sick and tired of refugees and want to forget them for ever but my father has been very ill since last year and I can't even think of a holiday in Europe. Somehow, I have never felt like going to the States but Italy still tempts me, I don't know when I can make it. I am still a bachelor and keep a nice flat, you are welcome, and live happily.

I know writing letters is difficult but at least once a year, New Year you must write me a few lines giving me all the news. If you owe me a long letter to give me all the news of yourself and perhaps some others I also knew, remember me to anyone you think I know and do, do give me all your news, what you are doing and how and all your happiness.

HARDER TO ROW OVER THE WAVES, THOSE BROKE ON THE SANDY SHORE, THAN ON THE SMOOTH SLOW MOOVING WATER OF THE RIVER THAT HARDLY HAD ENOUGH WATER TO ROW IN WHEN THE GATES OF THE WATERMILL WERE OPEN..THE RIVER WAS AN IDEAL PLACE TO LEARN THOUGH. IN THE EVENINGS WE TOOK WALKS WITH FRIENDS ON THE LONG OLEANDER LINED STREETS TO AN OTHER, A ROCKY PLACE ON THE SHORE.

THERE WAS A LOVELY PARK THERE, WITH AN OUTDOOR CAFE. WE SIPPED ESPRESSO WHILE LISTENING TO LIVE MUSIC, (I STILL COULD HEAR LOUD MUSIC WELL.) AND TO THE OCEAN'S FIERCE ATTACK ON THE ROCKS OF THE SHORE AT HIGH TIDE.

MY HUSBAND WORKED AT THE CAMP OFFICE. HIS BOSS NIKIL SEN WAS AN ENGLAND EDUCATED GENTLEMAN FROM NEW DELHI, INDIA.

HE WAS A TALL, TRIM, GOOD LOOKING PERSON ABOUT FORTY YEARS OLD, WHO ENJOYED THE ITALIAN " DOLCE VITA " LIFE STILE, THAT INDIA DID NOT OFFER. HE HAD THE TOP JOB, SOMETHING LIKE ADMINISTRATOR IN TRANI CAMP, BUT HIS JOB WAS NOT IN THE OFFICE ONLY.

NIKIL SAN WAS A SPY FOR THE BRITISH GOVERMENT, TO SPY ON US JEWS. HE DID NOT HAVE AN INK:LING THAT HIS MOST TRUSTED WORKER, MARTIN SIMONOWITS KNOWING HE WAS A SPY, TRICKED HIM OUT OF THE MOST VALUABLE INFORMATION HE COULD HAVE SERVED HIS EMPLOYERS WITH.

FOR INSTANCE: NIKI, AS HE TOLD ME TO CALL HIM, WAS SUPPOSED

TO BE AWARE OF THE TREE HUNDRED PEOPLE LEAVING THE CAMP, TO EMBARK ON ILLEGAL BOATS, THAT WENT TO ISRAEL.

BUT HOW COULD HE HAVE KNOWN IT, WHEN HE, THE CHIEF OF TRANI'S POLICE AND OTHERS, WHOSE JOB WAS TO BE AWARE OF IT, WERE HAVING A GOOD TIME DRINKING AT THE CAMP'S BALL THAT THEY WERE INVITED TO ON THAT NIGHT, AND WERE DANCING WITH ME AND OTHERS.

NIKI COULD HAVE LEARNED ABOUT THOSE TREEHUNDRED, WHEN THEY DID NOT SHOW UP IN HIS OFFICE FOR THE MONTHLY FOOD RATION CARDS AND HE WOULD HAVE HAD ON HIS HANDS THOSE CARDS LEFT.

IT WAS MARTIN WHO TOOK CARE OF THAT BY STEALING THE CARDS FROM THE OFFICE AND FORGING NIKI'S NAME ON THEM.

THOSE CARDS WERE CALLED "NEFESH " (SPIRITS) AND THE CAMP WORKERS WERE PAID WITH THEM. WE WERE GIVEN SEVEN OF THOSE.

WAS IMPORTANT THAT THOSE CARDS WERE REDEEMED, FOR THEY WERE COUNTED IN THE OFFICE OF NIKI AFTER THE KITCHEN RETURNED THEM.

LIKE OTHERS, I TOO WENT TO THE KITCHEN TO GET THE FOOD WITH THOSE CARDS, AND TOOK THE FOOD TO THE GATES OF THE CAMP, WHERE THE STARVING ITALIANS WAITED FOR US. THOSE POOR PEOPLE WERE FATTENED UP WITH THE FOOD, THAT THE SPIRITS PROVIDED FOR THEM.

NIKI WAS A PERSONAL FRIEND OF NEHRU. WHEN THE PAKISTANI REFUGEES STARTED TO TROUBLE NEHRU HE SENT A TELEGRAM TO NIKI ASKING HIM TO RETURN TO INDIA. NIKI WAS VERY UNHAPPY ABOUT THIS. HE NEVER HAD A GOOD CARELESS LIFE BEFORE HE CAME TO ITALY. ANYWAY HE WAS NOT AN EXPERT ON REFUGEE PROBLEMS, AS I SAID , HE WAS A SPY.

NIKI DID NOT ANSWER THE TELEGRAM AND AN OTHER ARRIVED FROM NEHRU. HE SHOWED IT TO ME, AND SAID THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR CHOICE NOW. SOON HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO INDIA, MAKING ME PROMISE TO KEEP IN TOUCH.

WHEN NIKI LIVED IN TRANI HE RENTED A VILLA SLOSE BY. WE WERE INVITED THERE FOR PARTIES. FOR A SHORT TIME HE ALSO LIVED IN BARI. FROM BARI HE SENT HIS CAR FOR US AND TOOK US OUT FOR DINNERS. WHEN WE HAD TO MOVE TO NAPOLY CAMP WE HAD AN OPEN INVITATION TO STAY AT HIS BEAUTIFUL APARTMENT THERE, CLOSE TO THE OCEAN, THAT WAS VISIBLE FROM THE BALCONY. WE WERE HIS GUESTS THERE FOR A FEW DAYS. BUT THERE WAS AN INCIDENT IN THE KITCHEN WHEN MARTIN WAS IN THE LIVINGROOM. I THOUGHT IT BETTER GO BACK TO CAMP LIVING...

WHEN JULIE WAS BORN I WROTE TO HIS FATHER'S ADDRESS HE LEFT WITH US. DR. SEN SENT HIM THE LETTER TO PAKISTAN. SOON WE GOT A CALL FROM THE U.N. AMBASSADOR FROM INDIA. SHE WAS CONGRATULATING US AND TELLING US, THAT A GIFT WAS ON THE WAY FOR JULIE. WHEN WE FINALLY LEARNED NIKI'S ADDRESS IN PAKISTAN, MARTIN'S LETTER CAME

BACK WRITTEN ON IT " HE TOOK HIS LIFE SHORT ". IT WAS A GREAT SHOCK. WE DID NOT KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. AND I KNEW HOW HE APPRECIATED LIFE, AND LOVED IT TO THE FULLEST. I WAS REALLY SAD TO LEARN THE BAD NEWS.

IN THE MEANTIME YVONNE WENT TO WORK FOR THE REFUGEE ORGANIZATION, IN ROMA. HER ENGLISH KNOWLEDGE WAS OF GREAT HELP. HAVING THIS JOB ENABLED HER TO LIVE OUT OF CAMP AS A PRIVATE CITIZEN. SHE WORKED THERE UNTIL HER TURN CAME UP TO EMIGRATE TO THE USA. THE LOCATION AND THE WAITING TIME ALLOWED HER TO SEE LOTS OF TREASURES AND THE BEAUTIES OF ROMA. I TOO HAD MY CHANCE TO LOOK WHEN WE WERE TRANSFERRED AGAIN TO CINECITTA. AFTER ROMA CAME BAGNOLY, THAT WAS CLOSE TO NAPLES. FROM THERE WE WERE TAKEN TO THE BAY OF SALERNO. WE WERE TAKEN THERE TO BE FATTENED UP, AFTER A SCANDAL.

THE PLACE IN SALERNO BAY WAS WHERE THE ENGLISH ARMY LIVED WHEN THEY LANDED IN ITALY. WE CAME TREE YEARS LATER. I ACTUALLY LOVED TO STAY THAT CLOSE TO THE OCEAN. THE SETTING WAS LOVELY.

IN SALERNO WE WERE SUPPOSED TO PUT ON WEIGHT BEFORE OUR EMIGRATION. A BOAT LOAD OF DISPLACED PERSONS WERE ON THE WAY TO AUSTRALIA, WHEN THE WEATHER TURNED VERY BAD AT SEA. THOSE PEOPLE, LIKE US, WERE IN AN ALREADY WEAK PHYSICAL CONDITION ON EMBARKING.

WHEN THE STORM HIT THEY WERE UNABLE TO EAT, WERE SICK ALL THE TIME. FORTY PEOPLE DIED ON THIS VOYAGE. IF THEY WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER FED THIS WOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED.

(THE YEAR WAS FORTYNINE. ON ARRIVING TO THE STATES I WAS STILL FORTY POUNDS UNDER MY WEIGHT THAT WAS HEALTHY FOR ME.)

THE LIVING QUARTERS IN SALERNO WAS MADE OF TIN. I ALREADY HAD A HEARING PROBLEM, SO IT DID NOT MATTER SO MUCH, BUT IT DID KEEP THE REST OF THEM AWAKE WHEN WE HAD STORMS AT NIGHT. IT SOUNDED TO ME LIKE A MUTED DRUM CONCERT, BUT IT MADE OTHERS RESTLESS FROM LACKING SLEEP.

I ALSO ENJOYED THE TRIPS WE TOOK TO SEE THE REST OF THE SURROUNDING AREA. ON THIS SIDE OF THE HALF ISLAND WAS AMALFI. IT IS A MOST BEAUTIFUL SEASIDE LOCATION. THE BAY OF SALERNO HAS CLEAR BLUE WATERS. THE WINDING ROAD FOLLOWING THE CONTOUR OF THE SEASHORE MAKES IT A BREATHTAKING RIDE. WHEN THE BUS STOPS, IT IS AT A CHARMING FOUNTAIN OF BRONZE.

THE OUTDOOR CAFES ARE INVITING THE TOURISTS TO SIT AND ENJOY THE " DELICIOSO " ESPRESSO COFFEE, ITS AROMA FLOATING IN THE AIR.

THE NEXT STOP OF THE BUS IS RAVELLO ON THE TOP OF THE HILL. THERE IS A CHURCH THERE, THAT WAS TRANSPORTED STONE BY STONE BY THE ROMANS FROM CONSTANTINOPLE.

Roma



Dining room after rain, 184
in the fattening camp. X



Ravello



Sorrento



The cat in the church



THE CHURCH WAS EMPTY, BUT FOR A CAT STRECHING BETWEEN TWO COLUMNS IN THE EARLY AFTERNOON SUN. THERE WAS A RESTAURANT AT THE EDGE OF THE MOUNTAIN, OVERLOOKING THE SPARKLING SEA, THAT INPREGNATED THE AIR WITH SALT.

THE TRIP RETURNING TO AMALFI WAS NOT SO UNEVENTFUL. THERE WAS A TRAFFIC JAM OF TWO VEHICLES AT THE BEND OF THE ROAD. WE ENCOUNTERED A HORSEDRAWN LARGER SIZE CARRIAGE, COMING FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION. THERE WAS NOT ENOUGH ROOM FOR BOTH TO PASS IN THE BEND. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN TOO RISKY FOR A BUS TO BACK UP ON THE NARROW SERPENTINE ROAD WITH A BUSFULL OF PASSENGERS. THE CARRIAGE HAD TO BE HELD BY PEOPLE, SO THE BUS COULD PASS JUST AN INCH AWAY.

IT WAS QUITE AN EXITEMENT, BUT WE FINALLY WERE ABLE TO CONTINUE ON OUR WAY BACK TO AMALFI AND SALERNO.

I WAS USED TO LIVING ON THE PLAINS OF HUNGARY AND TAKING OCCASIONAL TRIPS TO THE HILLY REGION. HUNGARY'S HIGHEST MOUNTAIN , THE MATRA, IS ABOUT THREE THOUSAND FEET HIGH. THE FIRST TIME I EXPERIENCED REAL MOUNTAINS WAS IN TYROL CAMP, IN AUSTRIA.

THIS PLACE LOOKED EVEN LOVELIER. (I WAS NOT THAT HUNGRY). THE DROP ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE ROAD TO THE BLUE SEA, AND THE HILL'S DROP TO THE ROAD, FULL OF FLOWERING OLEANDERS AND OTHER TREES, COMBINED WITH THE EVER UNFOLDING LANDSCAPE WITH EVERY TURN OF THE ROAD, WAS ADMIRERD BY THE TOURISTS WHO CAME FROM ALL AROUND THE WORLD TO ENJOY IT.

EVER SINCE I HEARD MY FATHER SING ABOUT SORRENTO, I HAD A FEELING, THAT ONE DAY I WILL SEE THE CITY. THE SONG DEPICTED IT A PLACE, WHERE A BROKEN HEART WILL HEAL, AND WHERE THE FLOWERING ORANGE TREES ARE STANDING IN SPLENDOR, IT'S FRAGRANCE CARRIED ON THE WAVES OF THE WIND.

DOWN IN THE WATER VACATIONERS SAILED IN THE BREEZE.

THERE WAS A BIG STORM A WEEK BEFORE, THAT HAD THROWN APPLES AND DRIFTWOOD ON THE BAY OF SALERNO, BUT THE WATERS CALMED DOWN, THOUGH IT WAS FULL OF MAN OF WAR AND THOSE TINY, LOVELY, WATER HORSES.

I LOVED ITALY, AND FOR ME IT WAS MUCH EASIER AND MORE ENJOYABLE TO BE IN ITALY THAN IN GERMANY. EVEN THOUGH THE ITALIANS HELPED THE GERMANS TO DO AWAY WITH A GOOD NUMBER OF JEWS, SOMEHOW I DID NOT FEEL THRETEANED BEING AMONG ITALIANS, LIKE I FELT IN GERMANY AMONG GERMANS.

WHEN I HAD TO GO TO PASSAU OR MUNICH, I DID NOT EVEN LOOK AT THE PEOPLE ON THE STREETS. TWENTY YEARS LATER I HAD TO GO TO THE GERMAN CONSULATE IN LOS ANGELES. I WAS SITTING IN THE WAITING ROOM FULL OF GERMAN TOURISTS. I LOOKED AROUND ME, AND I WAS SHOCKED TO REALIZE, THAT THEY ALL LOOKED LIKE VERY NICE PEOPLE, AND NOT MONSTERS.

IN GERMANY THERE WAS NOTHING TO LOOK AT, BUT RUINS. IN FORTY

SIX MOST OF MUNICH WAS A HEAP OF BRICKS AND STONES. ONE COULD SEE SIGNS WITH NAMES PLACED ON THE HEEPS, SAYING WHO USED TO LIVE THERE.

IN FORTYSEVEN IN ITALY THERE WAS NO DAMAGE TO THE BUILDINGS WHERE EVER I LIVED, AND WHERE EVER I WENT, THERE WAS BEAUTY. I TOOK MY TIME TO LOOK, FEEL AND ENJOY ALL THE BEAUTY THIS COUNTRY OFFERED BEFORE IT WAS MY TURN TO LEAVE FOR MY COUNTRY , ISRAEL.

THE " MARINE JUMPER " WAS A SMALL BOAT, A TRANSPORT BOAT. IT WAS BUILT TO TRANSPORT ONE THOUSAND SOLDIERS WHERE EVER THEY WERE NEEDED IN WWII.

IT WAS THOSE LOVELY WARM DAYS OF THE FALL, WHEN MY GROUP EMBARKED ON IT IN NAPLES. THE BOAT WAS SURROUNDED BY FLOCKS OF ROW-BOATS. PEDDLERS WERE TRYING TO SELL THEIR WARES MOSTLY BOTTLES OF WINE. THEY WERE NOT AWARE OF THAT MOST OF US DID NOT HAVE ANY MONEY. WHEN WE LEFT THE DOCKS WE SPENT SOME TIME A LITTLE DISTANCE AWAY. IT WAS FOR ME A NIGHT OF SEASICKNESS, STILL ON CALM OCEAN.

MANY OF US HAD THE SAME AFFLICTION. WE HAD NO STOMACH FOR THE SMOOTH, SMALL WAVES OF THE BAY, BUT IT DID NOT EVEN COME CLOSE TO, WHAT WAS COMING AFTER GIBRALTAR. THE FORTYNINE NOVEMBER WAS UNUSUALLY STORMY AT SEA. WE WERE SICK MOST OF THE TIME FROM THE TWENTY FOOT WAVES THAT FELT MORE LIKE TWENTY YARDS TO US.

IN THE ELEVEN DAYS THAT OUR TRIP TOOK I TRIED ONLY ONE TIME TO GO DOWN THE DINING ROOM. HALFWAY DOWN I HAD TO TURN BACK, THE SMELL OF FOOD HIT ME, AND I HAD TO RUN TO THE RAIL, JUST TO BE SICK ONE MORE TIME. CURIOUSLY I FELT FINE WHEN I WAS SHOWERING, BUT HOW MANY SHOWERS CAN ONE TAKE A DAY??????

THERE WAS ONE VERY INTERESTING HAPPENING WHILE WE WERE AT SEA.

IN ALL THOSE ELEVEN STORMY DAYS THERE WAS JUST ABOUT TWENTY MINUTES BREAK IN THE CLOUDS. A RAINBOW APPEARED OVER THE GREAT ATLANTIC OCEAN. I FOUND MYSELF STANDING FLEETINGLY AT THE VERY END OF THE RAINBOW.

MY HUSBAND, NOW MARTIN SIMON, HAD A NUMBER OF RELATIVES IN THE USA. HIS MAIN REASON TO COME TO THE STATES TO BE WITH HIS RELATIVES. ALSO AS HE TOLD ME "I CAN PROVIDE YOU WITH A BETTER LIFE THERE". THERE WAS STILL AN OTHER REASON. HE NEVER BELIEVED THAT " THE JEWS " WILL BE ABLE TO CREATE A HOMELAND. HE FORESAW THE ARABS KILLING EVERY ONE OF US SHOULD WE GO THERE.

ON THE OTHER HAND, I LEFT HUNGARY TO GO HOME TO ISRAEL.

THERE WAS ONE NOW, THERE WAS AN ISRAEL!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

IN THE MEANTIME THE WAR BROKE OUT, BUT I WANTED TO GO TO ISRAEL ANYWAY. THAT WAS MY HOME.

MARTIN'S SISTER ELISABETH, DID NOT WANT HIM TO COME TO THE USA IF HE WAS ALREADY MARRIED. SHE WARNED HIM IN "THAT LETTER". THERE WERE PLENTY OF GIRLS WHERE ELISABETH LIVED IN WILMINGTON, DEL. TO CHOOSE FROM. ELISABETH'S SISTER-INLAW HAD TWO ELIGIBLE GIRLS.

IT WAS A GLOOMY DAY, WHEN WE ARRIVED TO THE HARBOR OF NEW YORK. TWO BROTHERS WERE WAITING FOR US JACK, ALBIN, AND GABOR OUR FRIEND FROM POCKING. WE GOT ON THE SUBWAY, MY LEGS TREMBLING ALL THE WAY FROM WEAKNESS.. IT WAS LATE IN THE EVENING , WHEN JACK'S WIFE, A SWEET RUSSIAN LADY GREETED US IN THEIR HOME, WITH THEIR YOUNG SON, STANLY. THE FAMILY LIVED IN A ONE ROOM KITCHEN APARTMENT, THERE WAS A SMALL PANTRY OPENING FROM THE KITCHEN. A BED WAS SET UP FOR US IN THERE. BUT I COULD NOT SLEEP. THE MINUTE THE DOOR CLOSED, I JUST STARTED TO CRY AND COULD NOT STOP FOR A LONG TIME.

THERE WERE A FEW REASONS FOR MY BEHAVIOR. ONE OF THEM MUST HAVE BEEN EXHAUSTION....THE OTHER, THAT WHEN WE ARRIVED, JACK WENT DOWNSTAIRS TO THE NEIGHBOR TO CALL UP TWO SISTERS WHO LIVED CLOSE BY. HE TOLD THEM THAT WE ARRIVED, AND THEY SHOULD COME TO MEET US IN THE MORNING.. WE WERE TO TAKE THE TRAIN TO WILMINGTON LATER. JOLAN TOLD JACK, THAT IT WAS HER CLEANING DAY, SHE COULD NOT COME. BERTA HAD A BETTER EXCUSE. HER HUSBAND HAD AN OPERATION THREE WEEKS BEFORE, SO SHE COULD NOT COME.....

MY HUSBAND DID NOT TELL ME HOW HE FELT ON ACCOUNT OF WHAT HAPPENED, BUT IT BROKE MY HEART, HOW THIS,....HIS FAMILY BEHAVED TOWARD HIM. IT JUST.....WAS INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO ME, WHY THE SISTERS COULD NOT TAKE THAT FIFTEEN MINUTES WALK TO WELCOME A SURVIVOR BROTHER. GABOR WAS THERE FOR US, AND A COUSIN'S WIFE, ROSE CAME TO GREET US.

IT TOOK US ABOUT TWO HOURS TO GET TO WILMINGTON. I DID NOT KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT FROM ELISABETH, BUT I AM STILL NOT OVER WHAT HAPPENED ON ARRIVAL, MY HUSBAND RECOGNIZED HER THROUGH THE TRAIN WINDOW. IT WAS AN INTERSTING THING THAT HE SAW HER FOR THE LAST TIME THROUGH THE TRAIN WINDOW, WHEN HE WAS FOUR YEARS OLD, (IN BUDAPEST) LIFTED UP FOR A GOODBYE KISS TO BOSKE. (NOW ELISABETH.)

WE GOT OFF THE TRAIN, WE HUGGED, AND THIS IS WHAT ELISABETH TOLD ME: " YOU KNOW, I ALMOST DID NOT COME TO MEET YOU .SINCE IT IS A VERY BUSY DAY IN THE STORE, BUT I THOUGHT YOU KNOW, THAT YOU MIGHT NOT UNDERSTAND, SO I CAME." AND I WAS SPEACHLESS.

WE WENT DOWN THE STAIRS AND OUT ON THE STREET. IT WAS A COLD WINDY DAY. I WAS SHIVERING, STANDING ON THE CORNER IN THE COLD WIND. I DID NOT KNOW WHAT IT WAS WE WERE WAITING FOR.

WHEN ELISABETH AND MY HUSBAND STOPPED TALKING, I ASKED HER " WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?" ELISABETH'S SISTER IN LAW FROM THE FIRST MARRIAGE, WHO WAS ALSO THERE, SAID "WE ARE WAITING FOR MY HUSBAND ". HE IS DOING A BRIS IN DOVER AND WHEN HE WILL FINISH HE WILL PICK US UP, HE PROMISED".

WE WERE WAITING AND I WAS FREEZING, AND MISERABLE, AND I SAID " WHY WONT WE TAKE A BUS, OR LOOK THERE ARE FREE TAXIS THERE?" AND BOTH SAID "THERE IS A BUS STRIKE,AND ELISABETH ADDED AND I DONT HAVE MONEY ON ME FOR TAXI".

I WAS THINKING, "MY GOD THE WOMAN IS HERE FOR TWENTY YEARS AND WORKING FOR AS MANY, AND SHE HAS NO MONEY ON HER, MAYBE SHE HAS NO MONEY, PERIOD, IN AMERICA."

IT SCARED ME.

BUT FINALLY RABBI MULLER ARRIVED, AND WE WERE TAKEN "HOME" TO ELISABETH.

IT WAS A SMALL GROCERY STORE WE CAME TO.

HERRIETT AND ARTHUR WERE WORKING IN THE STORE. A FEW LATE CUSTOMERS WERE STILL SHOPPING FOR THE HOLIDAY. WE WENT THROUGH THE STORE, THROUGH A BEDROOM INTO A SITTING ROOM , OUT OF WHICH A BATHROOM AND KITCHEN OPENED.. WE SAT DOWN AND SOON A GIRL ARRIVED THROUGH THE STORE WITH A MAGAZINE AND SOME POTATO CHIPS IN HER HANDS.

LILLY WAS THE DAUGHTER OF THE MULLERS. SHE LAY DOWN ON THE SOFA BED TO READ AND EAT THE POTATO CHIPS. I THINK SHE WAS ONE OF THE CANDIDATES FOR BRIDE, FOR MARTIN. THERE WAS ANOTHER DAUGHTER, RUTHY WHO WAS GETTING TREATMENTS OF HYPNO-THERAPY AT THE TIME FOR PULLING OUT ALL OF HER HAIR. SHE WAS IN THE STATE HOSPITAL. (THE TREATMENT DID NOT HELP.)

LILLY WAS BEAUTIFUL WITH LOVELY BLOND HAIR. SHE DID NOT ASK US ANYTHING, LIKE " DID YOU HAVE A GOOD TRIP?". SHE DID NOT SAY ANYTHING AND HER BODY LANGUAGE CLEARLY STATED THAT SHE HAD NO INTEREST

IN US. I WAS PUZZLED, WHY DID SHE COME ?.

LILLY GOT MARRIED LATER TO A VERY NICE YOUNGER MAN. HE LEARNED ABOUT LILLY'S AGE WHEN HERRIETT BLURTED IT OUT HALF HOUR BEFORE THE WEDDING CEREMONY.

TWO YEARS BEFORE THAT A TERRIBLE THING HAPPENED TO LILLY. A JEWISH NEWSPAPER OF NEW YORK ADVERTISED A PHOTO BEAUTY CONTEST. SOMEONE SENT IN LILLY'S PICTURE ON WHICH SHE LOOKED LIKE AN ANGEL. ONLY, IT WAS AN OLD PICTURE, AND LILLY GAINED TWENTY FIVE POUNDS SINCE IT WAS TAKEN. SHE HAD TO APPEAR TO TAKE THE PRIZE IF SHE WON. SHE DID. THERE WERE PRICES LIKE A TRIP TO ISRAEL, MINK COAT, HUNDREDS OF MARRIAGE OFFERS FROM YOUNG MAN. IT WAS FANTASTIC!!!!

LILLY STARVED AND EXERCISED TO THE POINT WHERE SHE HAD A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN IN THE NEW YORK SUBWAY. THE AMBULANCE TOOK HER TO A HOSPITAL WHERE SHE RECOVERED FROM THE THERAPY.

"LUCKILY" AT THE TIME WHEN LILLY'S BREAKDOWN OCCURED THE NEWSPAPER THAT MADE THE CONTEST, WENT BANKRUPT, AND HAD TO CANCEL LILLY'S APPARENCE. THE NEXT TIME I MET LILLY WAS AT HER WEDDING AND A FEW YEARS LATER WHEN SHE HAD CHILDREN. SHE AND HER KIDS LOOKED GREAT AND THE WHOLE FAMILY GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF A HAPPY BUNCH..

IT WAS LATER WHEN THE STORE WAS CLOSED, THAT WE LEARNED ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DAY FOR A SMALL GROCER. IT WAS THE DAY BEFORE THANKSGIVING, WHICH WE DID NOT KNOW WHAT IT WAS. NEXT DAY WE GOT AN EXPLANATION, WHEN WE WERE INVITED TO THE HOLIDAY DINNER. ACTUALLY WE WERE INVITED FOR BREAKFAST, SINCE THE ROOMING HOUSE WHERE ELISABETH RENTED US A ROOM, HAD NO COFFEE SHOP.

WHEN WE WOKE UP IN^{THE} MORNING AND GOT DRESSED, WE WALKED OVER TO ELISASABETH'S PLACE WHICH WAS HALF BLOCK AWAY. IT WAS STILL A GLOOMY COLD DAY, OVERCAST, AND RAINING. QUITE A CHANGE FROM SUNNY ITALY WHERE TWO WEEKS BEFORE THE PALMS OF NAPLES WAVED US GOODBY IN THE SUNBATHED HARBOR.

THE CONTRAST WAS DEPRESSING, BUT I HAD TO EXPERIENCE THE DAY YET TO COME. WHEN WE ARRIVED TO ELISABETH'S PLACE, ESTER, HER SISTER IN LAW WAS ALSO VISITING THERE. SHE TOLD ME ~~THAT~~ "MAGDA I THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA FOR BOTH OF YOU TO TAKE LAXATIVES, SO ALL THE BAD FOOD YOU ATE IN EUROPE WILL BE CLEANED OUT OF YOUR SYSTEM".

I WAS THIRTYFIVE-FORTY POUNDS UNDERWEIGHT AT THE TIME FROM STARVING, AND BEING SICK FOR ELEVEN DAYS ON THE BOAT. SO HER OBSERVATION TOOK MY BREATH, AND I COULD NOT ANSWER HER.

ESTER WENT IN THE OTHER ROOM AND CAME BACK WITH ELISABETH. ELISABETH SPORTED A PAIR OF SCISSORS IN HER HAND, AND ESTER WAS

RIGHT BESIDE HER. I WAS IN THE KITCHEN HELPING HERRIETT WITH THE FOODMAKING.

ELISABETH AND ESTER CAME CLOSE TO ME AND SAID, "WE WILL CUT YOUR HAIR". SHE DID NOT LIKE MY HAIR, SO SHE AND ESTER DECIDED THAT THEY WILL CUT IT, WITHOUT ASKING ME.

THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, THAT SOMEONE DID NOT LIKE MY HAIR AND SAID IT. ALL MY FRIENDS AND MY WHOLE FAMILY CONSTANTLY COMMENTED ON THE BEAUTY OF MY HAIR. LATER THOUGH ONE MORE PERSON WAS DISPLEASED WTH MY HAIR. MY HUSBAND. BUT IT TURNED OUT THAT HE DID NOT LIKE ANYTHING ABOUT ME EXCEPT THAT I NEVER COMPLAINED. AND IN OUR LONG YEARS OF MARRIAGE HE EVENTUALLY LET ME KNOW ABOUT ALL MY FAULTS IN DETAILS.

I TOLD THE LADIES THAT I LIKED MY HAIR THE WAY IT WAS.

THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AND STEPPED CLOSER TO ME.

AND THEY CORNERED ME IN THE KITCHEN.

ELISABETH OPENED THE SCISSORS AND RAISED HER ARM.

THAT IS WHEN I TOOK A DIP AND BOLTED UNDER HER ARM FOR THE DOOR, GRABBING MY COAT ON THE WAY..... I DID NOT WANT MY HAIR CUT, AND I DID NOT WANT MY HAIR CUT BY A SMALL GROCER....

I HAD A HEARING AID, THAT I WAS HIDING UNDER MY HAIR. AT THAT TIME THE HEARING AID WAS OF GREAT HELP TO ME STILL.

WHEN PEOPLE NOTICED THAT I HAVE A HEARING AID, THEY STARTED TO TALK LAUDER. THAT HURT MY EARDRUM. I REACHED TO TURN IT DOWN. THE PERSON TALKING TO ME, MUST HAVE THOUGHT, THAT I STILL DID NOT HEAR, AND RAISED VOICE AGAIN, TILL I DID NOT HEAR ANYTHING FROM THE MIXUP. THAT IS WHY I HID IT UNDER MY HAIR, OF WHICH I HAD PLENTY. BY THE WAY, ELISABETH WORE A WIG, IT WAS NOT IN FASHION YET, AND NOT FOR RELIGIOUS REASON.

WHEN THIS HAPPENED TO ME, I HAD A FLASHBACK. I WAS IN AUSCHWITZ AGAIN, AND MY ENEMIES WERE CUTTING MY HAIR AND SHAVING IT. ONLY THIS WAS WORSE. THIS WAS "MY FAMILY".

WHEN I GOT THROUGH THE DOOR, I FELT LIKE A HUNTED ANIMAL MIGHT FEEL. IT WAS RAINING STILL. THE TEARS RUNNING DOWN MY FACE MINGLED WITH THE RAIN WATER. I HAD NO ONE TO TALK TO. I DID NOT KNOW ANYONE IN THIS CRUEL CITY, EXCEPT THOSE WHO WANTED TO HURT ME. CURIOUSLY MY HUSBAND DID NOT SEEM TO NOTICE IN HIS HAPPY STATE THAT SOMETHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY WAS HAPPENING TO ME.

I RAN TO THE BOARDING HOUSE. AS I SAT ON THE BED CRYING, MY HUSBAND CAME AFTER ME, TO TELL ME THAT GABOR ARRIVED TO ELISABETH'S PLACE FROM NEW YORK. NEVER ASKING ME WHY THE TEARS??????

GABOR SAW HOW UNHAPPY I WAS, AND WANTED TO TALK BUT THE PLACE WAS TOO CROWDED AND WE COULD NOT.

SITTING AT THE TABLE WITH ALL THESE PEOPLE, I FELT THE LONELIEST EVER IN MY LIFE.

THE LADIES GAVE UP THE IDEA OF CUTTING MY HAIR AFTER SEEING HOW UNREASONABLE I WAS, BUT EVERY TIME I MET ELISABETH SHE WOULD FIND SOMETHING UNSATISFACTORY ABOUT ME, OR NOT TO HER LIKING. SHE HAD A VERY STRAITFORWARD WAY OF TELLING ME, THAT I LOOKED SICK, I LOOKED TERRIBLE, OR HOW CAN I LIVE IF I HAVE TO WEAR A HEARING AID. SHE USED TO ASK ME IF I LOOKED IN THE MIRROR AND "IS THAT THE WAY TO LOOK" OR WAS I SURE I WAS NOT SICK?.

IT DID NOT TAKE VRY LONG THAT I DEVELOPED BLEEDING ULCERS AGAIN, PASSING RED BLOOD LIKE IN ITALY. I DID NOT GO TO SEE A DR. I DID NOT FEEL LIKE I WANTED TO LIVE IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES.

I FELT DESPARATELY LONELY IN A STRANGE LAND, AND IN AN EVEN STRANGER WORLD THIS FAMILY CREATED AROUND ME. I WAS SO ALIEN AMONG THEM.

IF NOT FOR DOROTHY MOORE, THE LADY I WAS WORKING FOR, WHO WAS EXTREMELY NICE TO ME, I DONT KNOW HOW I WOULD HAVE SURVIVED THE FIRST FEW MONTHS THAT I SPENT IN THIS COUNTRY. SHE WAS A VERY KIND PERSON AND PAID ME FROM THE START, WHILE I WAS LEARNING THE TRADE. ELISABETH GOT ME THE JOB BEFORE WE CAME. IT WAS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR ME TO BE WITH THIS KIND PERSON, WHO ALSO SPOKE BEAUTIFUL ENGLISH.

I WAS VERY HAPPY ABOUT IT, I WANTED TO LEARN HER BEAUTIFUL LANGUAGE. DOROTHY'S GOODNESS TO ME PARTLY BALANCED THE UTTER EMOTIONAL MISERY OF THE REST OF THE DAY.

IN ALL RESPECT IT WAS A BAD TIME FOR ME TO ARRIVE TO AMERICA. I WAS EMOTIONALLY DEVASTATED AFTER LOOSING MY WHOLE FAMILY AND MOST OF MY FRIENDS. I WAS LOOKING FOR SOME REASSURENCE, THAT THERE WAS A COUNTRY WHERE ALL PEOPLE WERE PEOPLE.

THE FIRST TIME I SAW THE SIGN THAT READ "FOR WHITES ONLY" THREW ME INTO AN EMOTIONAL TURMOIL. THE WAY I KNEW, AMERICA STOOD FOR FREEDOM FOR ALL. IT SEEMED TO ME THAT AMERICA DID NOT LIVE UP TO PROMISE. I FELT THREATENED AGAIN.

ALSO WHEN I WENT TO WORK AT ANOTHER PLACE, THE WORKERS WITHOUT ASKING ME WHO I WAS, - I LEARNED LATER, - THEY HATED ME FOR BEING A GERMAN GIRL , WHO MARRIED AN AMERICAN SOLDIER. MOST OF ALL I WAS NOT GERMAN, AND I WAS MARRIED TO ANOTHER JEW FROM HUNGARY.

MONTHS WENT BY, WHEN THEY DISCOVERED THAT. IN THE MEANTIME I WAS NOT TREATED KINDLY, TO PUT IT MILDLY. BUT I WAS NOT KIDDING MYSELF. THEY DID NOT LOVE ME BECAUSE NOW THEY KNEW IT. ACTUALLY LATER THEY WERE SCARED OF ME, BECAUSE WHILE THEY BELIEVED ME TO BE GERMAN, THEY DID MAKE REMARKS ABOUT JEWS, NOT VERY FLATTERING.

A DAY BEFORE THE JEWISH HOLIDAY I ANNOUNCED TO MY COWORKERS THAT I WILL NOT COME IN THE NEXT TWO DAYS. ONE OF THEM TOLD ME, "IT DOES NOT WORK THAT WAY". AND I SAID "THAT IS HOW IT WORKS FOR ME ON JEWISH HOLIDAYS". THE BLOOD LEFT THEIR FACES. I COULD DETECT THEM THINKING, "WHAT DID I SAY ABOUT JEWS?". SEE THE BOSS WAS JEWISH.

IT WAS NOT A BED OF ROSES, BUT WHEN I WENT TO GET A PART-TIME JOB, AND ENROLLED IN THE DE BALAZ FLESHER SCHOOL OF FASHION DESIGNING IN PHILADELPHIA, THE SITUATION CHANGED. I WAS NOT SO MUCH IN TOUCH WITH THE WORKERS THERE I HELD MY DISTANCE. I DID NOT WANT TO GET HURT OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

I TRAVELED IN THE AFTERNOON TO PHILADELPHIA, AND LEARNED "DRAPING". I WAS MOSTLY INTERESTED IN GOWN DESIGN, I THOUGHT I HAD FLAIR FOR....ON FINISHING SCHOOL I STARTED TO WORK FOR INDIVIDUALS WHO WERE TIRED OF PAYING A FORTUNE FOR A GOWN, JUST TO FIND AT THE EXCLUSIVE CLUB'S AFFAIR TWO OTHER WOMEN WEARING THE SAME GOWN. I HAD WONDERFUL CUSTOMERS WHO WERE GRATEFUL FOR THE ONE OF A KIND DESIGN I MADE FOR THEM, AND NEVER A COPY. ONE GRATEFUL CUSTOMER GAVE ME TWENTY YARDS OF HAND WOVEN THAI SILK IN GRATITUDE. AN OTHER DUBLICATED MY FIGURE,SO I WILL BE ABLE TO SEW FOR MYSELF. IT WAS VERY REWARDING FOR ME TO BE CREATIVE.

WHEN I CAME TO AMERICA I ALREADY HAD SEWING EXPERIENCE, AND I LOOKED FORWARD TO DESIGN GOWNS. I ALSO LIKED TO MAKE THE

LAMPSHADES FOR DOROTHY, WHO WAS RECENTLY MARRIED TO DR. PETER STEELE. THEY WERE A PERFECT MATCH, AND STILL ARE FIFTY YEARS LATER. BUT THERE WAS A PROBLEM FOR ME WITH THE SHADES. I ALWAYS SCRATCHED MY MYSELF. AT ONE TIME A LADY CAME IN, WANTING A LARGE SILK SHADE. SHE FOUND THE PRICE TOO HIGH. I TOLD DOROTHY TO TELL HER THAT IF SHE WANTED A BARGAIN, I WILL USE ONLY HALF A PINT OF BLOOD FOR HER SHADE MAKING. IT WAS FIFTY YEARS AGO THAT THIS HAPPENED.....

TWENTY YEARS LATER WE MOVED TO CALIFORNIA. DOROTHY AND I ARE STILL FRIENDS. SHE CAME TO VISIT ME TEN YEARS AGO BUT NOW IT WOULD BE HARD FOR HER, SHE SAID. I GO TO WILMINGTON TO SEE MY COUSINS AND FAMILY. I WOULD NEVER MISS TO VISIT WITH DOROTHY AND HER HUSBAND. THEY STILL LOOK AT EACH OTHER LIKE WHEN THEY WERE NEWLY WED. I LOVE THEM SO.....

, I MIGHT HAVE BEEN HAPPIER IN WILMINGTON, IF I DID NOT MAKE THE MISTAKE OF COMPARING MY NEW FAMILY, WITH THE ONE I DID NOT HAVE ANYMORE. FAMILY RELATIONSHIP WAS VERY IMPORTANT FOR ME. MAYBE BECAUSE I WAS STILL YOUNG (16) WHEN I WAS LEFT WITHOUT MY FAMILY, OR MAYBE BECAUSE THE GOOD RELATIONSHIP I HAD WITH THEM. I FELT THAT THE GOODNESS OF LIFE ITSELF WAS THE GOOD RELATIONSHIP. THERE WAS AN ALL AROUND WHAT IS CALLED TODAY " UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE ATTITUDE". AT THAT TIME THERE WAS NO NAME FOR IT, IT WAS JUST THE WAY MY FAMILY

ACTED, AND IT WAS FELT BY US, CHILDREN. I BELIEVE OUR PARENTS ATTITUDE TOWARD US WAS INFLUENCED BY THE POLITICAL SITUATION. THEY TRIED TO BALANCE THE HARSHNESS WE CHILDREN WERE NOT USED TO IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD YET. IT WAS A HEAVY TASK FOR THEM. INTERESTINGLY WE WERE NOT SPOILED AND BOTH MY BROTHERS AND I WERE VERY INDEPENDENT. THIS INDEPENDENCE CAME HANDY WHEN I WAS ROBBED OF MY FAMILY AT THAT EARLY AGE.

AS I WAS NOT USED TO CONSTANT CRITICISMS FROM RELATIVES AS FROM ELISABETH, I DID NOT KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THEM, EXCEPT GETTING MORE AND MORE DEPRESSED. I HAD THIS FEELING AGAIN AND AGAIN THAT LIFE WAS NOT WORTH LIVING.

IT WAS OF GREAT FORTUNE TO ME, THAT FRIENDS STARTED TO ARRIVE FROM EUROPE, AND I STARTED TO GET MORE EMOTIONAL SUPPORT.

ONE OF THESE FRIENDS WAS EDA SENSKI. SHE WAS A PERSON FULL OF LIFE, ENERGY, LOVE. SHE WAS VERY ORGANIZED. SHE CAME FROM LOSONC, THE THEN CHEHOSLOVAKIA. THIS PART OF HUNGARY WAS GIVEN AWAY TO THE CHEHS IN NINETEEN-~~EI~~TEEN AND HITLER GAVE IT BACK TO HUNGARY IN THIRTYNINE. CAME THE SECOND WORLD WAR AND AGAIN IT BECAME CHEH.

EDA'S FAMILY, THE PLACEKS, SURVIVED THE HOLOCAUST. UNFORTUNATELY EDA'S FATHER DIED NOT MUCH AFTER THEY CAME TO THE USA. EDA WAS MARRIED TO EGON SENSKY, A WONDERFUL MOST UNSELFISH HUSBAND.

IT WAS VERY INTERESTING HOW WE MET.

WHEN WE WERE IN TRANI CAMP, SOMEONE CAME FROM THE RAILWAY STATION TELLING MY HUSBAND THAT A TRAIN IS STUCK THERE AND THAT THE PEOPLE ON THE TRAIN ARE ON THE WAY TO BARI, WHERE A BOAT WAITS FOR THEM TO GO TO ISRAEL.

MATYI WENT OUT TO SEE, MAYBE THERE IS SOMEONE HE MIGHT KNOW. THE MAN SAID THEY WERE FROM CHECHOSLOVAKIA. MATYI'S MOTHER WAS BORN THERE, IN ARVAVARALJA. HE WENT TO THE STATION AND THE FIRST PERSON HE MET WAS EGON. THEY WERE TOGETHER IN FORCED LABOR CAMP FOR SOME TIME. EGON WAS A SMART PERSON. HE AND A FEW OTHERS ESCAPED, BEFORE THE GROUP WAS TAKEN TO CONCENTRATION CAMP.

EVENTUALLY MATYI WAS LIBERATED HALF DEAD FROM DACHAU.

BUT EGON WEARING A BOYSCOUT OUTFIT PASSED FOR A GENTILE IN BUDAPEST. WHEN EGON AND MATYI MET, HE ASKED EGON, "WHERE ARE YOU GOING?". EGON SAID: "WE ARE MOVING TO ISRAEL". AND MATYI: "WHY NOT TO AMERICA?". "IS IT POSSIBLE?" "SURE".

THE SENSKYS GOT OFF THE TRAIN WITH THEIR HANDBAG AND WALKED INTO CAMP. THEY REGISTERED AND STARTED TO WORRY RIGHT AWAY.

EDA'S PARENTS WERE COMING WITH THE NEXT TRANSPORT, ALSO GOING TO BARI, AND ISRAEL. YES, YES, BUT THE TRAIN DOES NOT ALWAYS STOP IN TRANI. THERE WAS A PROBLEM WITH A LATE TRAIN WHEN EGON AND

EDA CAME. THEY HAD TO WAIT FOR A LATE TRAIN TO PASS.

I MET THE PLACEKS EDA'S PARENTS NOT MUCH LATER THEY GOT OFF THE SLOW MOVING TRAIN. IT WAS A VERY HOT DAY. THE LEAFS OF THE TREES WERE ALL DRIED AND OUR HAIR WAS STANDING UP FROM THE ELECTRICITY IN THE AIR. IT WAS TOO HOT FOR EVEN THAT PART OF ITALY.

IT JUST MADE IT HARDER FOR THE ALREADY INSECURE PLACEKS WHO UNDERTOOK A LIFE CHANGE BY GOING TO A POLITICALLY BOILING COUNTRY, AND NOW HALF WAY THERE, GIVING UP THE PLAN AND JUST HOPE, THEY WILL BE ABLE TO GET INTO STILL ANOTHER COUNTRY.

THE PLACEKS SEEMED VERY UPSET. I DONT KNOW HOW THEY COPE WITH ALL THESE. EVER SINCE FORTYFOUR OUR LIFE WAS FULL OF DREADFUL INSECURITIES. THAT DID NOT MEAN ONE GOT USED TO THEM THOUGH.

CHEHOSLOVAKIA WAS A COMMUNIST COUNTRY, WITH A LEADER WHO SYMPHATIZED WITH THE CAUSE OF THE "LEFT OVER" JEWS AND LET OUT A GOOD NUMBER OF THEM TO ISRAEL, BUT NOT TO AMERICA. HE WAS LATER EXECUTED, I AM NOT SURE, THAT THIS WAS HIS "CRIME", HE HAD TO PAY FOR WITH HIS LIFE.

GYONGYI, EDA'S MOTHER TOLD ME THAT BEFORE THEY ARRIVED TO TRANI SHE PRETENDED TO BE VERY SICK, AND WHEN THE TRAIN SLOWED DOWN THEY GRABBED THE HANDBAGS AND GOT OFF THE TRAIN IN SLIPPERS. ALL THEIR BELONGINGS WENT TO ISRAEL, INCLUDING EDA'S PIANO.

IT TOOK SOME TIME FOR THE FAMILY TO CALM DOWN, GO TO REGISTER, AND SETTLE INTO CAMP LIFE, UNTIL THEY EMIGRATED TO THE USA.

WHILE IN ITALY WE BECAME FRIENDS. I WAS FEELING VERY CLOSE TO EDA. SHE WAS VERY UNDERSTANDING WITH MY HEARING DIFFICULTIES AND WHAT WENT WITH IT. I ACQUIRED A CLUMSY HEARING AID, ABOUT THE TIME THEY ARRIVED. THE LARGE BATTERIES WERE CARRIED IN MY POCKETBOOK.

EDA DESIGNED AND MADE FOR ME A SOFT LEATHER BELT, WITH A POCKET (THAT IS SO POPULAR TODAY) FOR THE BATTERIES. I COULD PUT THE WIRE THROUGH A HOLE IN MY DRESS AT THE WAISTLINE, AND IT CONNECTED TO THE EARPIECE. I CARRIED THE BATTERIES BEFORE IN A POCKETBOOK. MY HANDS WERE FREE AGAIN, IT MADE ME FEEL FREE, AND I WAS FOREVER IN DEBT TO EDA FOR HER DESIGN WORK, BUT MOST OF ALL HER GOOD WILL TOWARD ME.

EGON WAS A VERY LIKEABLE PERSON FROM THE START. THE TWO OF THEM MADE A LOVELY COUPLE. AND SO DID THE PLACEKS.

WE MADE GOOD FRIENDS WHILE WAITING FOR EMIGRATION. WENT TOGETHER TO THE NEARBY BEACH ON HOT DAYS, AND FOR EVENING WALKS DOWN THE OTHER PART OF THE SEASHORE THROUGH OLEANDER LINED STREETS.

WE WENT TO THE PIZZA PLACE, AND THE ICECREAM PARLOR, THAT WE GAVE THE NAME " THE LITTLE DIRTY ONE". THE ICECREAM WAS MOST DELICIOUS HOWEVER.

THE TWO FAMILIES DID NOT HAVE TO WAIT LONG FOR THE EMIGRATION. AND WHEN WE ALL ARRIVED , WE CONTINUED TO BE FRIENDS. THEY LIVED ON LONG ISLAND AND WE IN WILMINGTON.

SOON THE SENSKYS HAD A MOST LOVELY BABY GIRL. WHEN I SAW HER I TOO GOT INSPIRED AND RIGHT AFTER I LEARNED THAT MY BABY CANNOT INHERIT MY HEARING PROBLEM, JULIE MY FIRST BORN WAS ON THE WAY.

EDA CAME DOWN WITH HER THREE YEAR OLD ARLEANE TO TEACH ME THE BASICS ON MY REAL BABY. I ALREADY TOOK CLASSES WHERE I WAS TAUGHT TO WORK WITH DOLLS. EDA HAD THREE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND HAD A CALM, LOVELY, SMART AND BEAUTIFUL CHILD.

WHILE SHE WAS LOOKING AT JULIE ONE DAY ARLEANE ASKED HER MOTHER "WHY DONT WE HAVE SUCH?". EDA TOOK THE HINT AND SOON VICKY, AN OTHER LOVELY GIRL WAS BORN. IT WAS INVALUABLE THAT EDA PARTED HER KNOWLEDGE WITH ME. IT WAS NOT ONLY HER GOOD INFLUENCE, BUT THE WHOLE FAMILY'S HELP, THAT HELPED ME TROUGH DIFFICULTIES.

THE PLACEKS AND THE SENSKYS TOOK A LARGE APARTMENT, AND THEY LIVED TOGETHER HELPING OUT EACH OTHER. LATER WHEN THE SENSKYS BOUGHT A THREE STORY HOME, THEY MOVED TOGETHER AGAIN WHEN EDA'S FATHER DIED. EGON INSISTED THAT GYONGYI MOVE IN WITH THEM.

TO SEE THREE GENERATIONS TOGETHER SIX YEARS AFTER THE HOLOCCAUST WAS VERY UPLIFTING FOR ME.

EDA, WHO STUDIED IN PRAGA TO BECOME A PHARMACIST, NOW LEARNED HOW TO MAKE BEAUTIFUL CLOTHES FOR HER MOTHER GYONGYI. SHE DRESSED HER IN THE MOST LOVELY SILK DRESSES LOOKING LIKE THE QUEEN MOTHER.

EDA AND FAMILY LIVED HUNDRED TWENTY MILES FROM US ON LONG ISLAND. I DESPARATELY WANTED TO MOVE TO NEW YORK WHERE WE ALREADY HAD A NUMBER OF FRIENDS SETTLED THERE. BSIDES THE SENSKYS. THE HELLERS, THE ALMASYS, THE DENES GIRLS, THE LIGETIS, GABOR, ALL FROM POCKING.

WHEN WE GOT TO WILMINGTON, THERE WAS NO ONE WITH THE BACKGROUND WE CAME FROM. PEOPLE DID NOT SHOW MUCH INTEREST IN US AND WHEN I STARTED TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT OUR BACKGROUND THE MULLERS SAID "JUST FORGET IT". LATER WE MET A YOUNG COUPLE FROM POLAND, AND STILL LATER TWO BOYS ARRIVED, THE KOKOTEKS. SOON HENRY WAS GETTING MARRIED TO EDITH BRENNER A GERMAN SURVIVOR. EDITH AND HER FAMILY HID IN THE FOREST IN GERMANY FOR A WHILE, AND OTHER TIMES THEY WERE HIDING IN A HOUSE OF ILL REPUTE.. EDITH WAS A YOUNG GIRL AT THE TIME.

HER MOTHER, EDITH TOLD ME WAS VERY DETERMINED, THAT SHE WAS NOT GOING TO LOOSE HER CHILDREN. UNFORTUNATELY EDITH'S SISTER DISAPPEARED, HER FATHER WAS GONE LONG.

MATYI WAS A CHILD HIS MOTHER WAS YEARNING FOR, FOR TOO MANY YEARS. WHEN FINALLY HE WAS BORN, SHE CALLED HIM, I WAS TOLD, "MY ONLY ONE" IN THE GERMAN LANGUAGE. THIS BOTHERED THE REST OF THE CHILDREN TERRIBLY.

PAULA HAD A CHILD BEFORE, A LOVELY GIRL, NAMED ROZSIKA. BEFORE AND AFTER ROZSIKA'S BIRTH, PAULA'S YEARS WERE FULL OF PAIN AND FRUSTRATION. EVERY TIME PAULA WAS EXPECTING A BABY, SHE COULD NOT CARRY IT TO TERM, OR THEY WERE DEAD AT BIRTH. SHE LOST SEVERAL BEFORE MATYI WAS BORN. THAT IS WHY THIS BABY BOY MADE PAULA SO HAPPY.

PAULA WAS NOT A WELL PERSON..HER FEET WERE ALWAYS SWOLLEN MAKING IT HARD FOR HER TO PUT ON SHOES. AND SHE ALSO NEEDED A HERNIA OPERATION FOR YEARS, BUT SHE HAD TO WORK AND IT DID NOT TAKE PLACE UNTIL MATYI WAS ABOUT THREE AND A HALF YEARS OLD. THAT WAS WHEN BOSKE ONE OF PAULA'S STEPDAUGHTER BECAME A BRIDE OF A VISITING AMERICAN.

BOSKE INSISTED ON AND DID NOT LEAVE THE COUNTRY BEFORE PAULA HAD THE OPERATION. BEFORE THE GROOM LEFT FOR THE STATES GAVE MONEY TO BOSKE FOR A WIG.(HE WAS THAT KIND OF RELIGIOUS). HE ALSO BOUGHT HER A FIRST CLASS PASSAGE ON THE QUEEN ELISABETH. (MARY?) BOSKE INSTEAD OF BUYING A WIG, GAVE THE MONEY TO PAULA FOR THE OPERATION. WHILE PAULA WAS IN THE HOSPITAL BOSKE TOOK CARE OF THE LITTLE BOY, AND WAITED FOR PAULA TO GET STRONGER.

AT AGE FOUR MATYI WENT TO KINDERGARTEN, WHERE HE LEARNED TO TRANSLATE THE HEBREW BIBLE TO GERMAN NOT UNDERSTANDING ANY OF THE TWO LANGUAGES. THIS WAS THE USUAL HOW RELIGIOUS EDUCATION STARTED FOR RELIGIOUS KIDS AT THAT TIME.

PAULA GOT WELL AND WENT BACK TO WORK..

SHE HAD TO WORK, AFTER HER MARRIAGE TOOK PLACE TO HERMAN AND HIS SEVEN (YES) CHILDREN. SOON HE WAS GONE TO FIGHT IN THE FIRST WW., AND SOON HE WAS CAPTURED AND SPENT YEARS IN CAPTIVITY. IT GAVE HIM ENOUGH MATERIAL TO KEEP HIS FRIENDS ENTERTAINED FROM THE END OF THE FIRST TO THE BEGINNING OF SECOND WW.

BOTH PAULA AND HERMAN DIED IN THE GASCHAMBER OF AUSCHWITZ.

PAULA, BECAUSE SHE WAS HOLDING HER BELOVED GRANDCHILD, A GIRL, ROZSIKA'S BABY IN HER ARMS. THAT COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED IF PAULA DID NOT INSIST THAT THE GENTILE WOMAN WHO TOOK CARE OF THE BABY, BRING HER TO GYONGYOS GHETTO IN THE LAST MINUTE.

ROZSIKA WAS ALREADY DEPORTED, BECAUSE SHE WAS CAUGHT ON GETTING ON THE BUS WITHOUT PERMIT THAT JEWS NEEDED.

ON ARRIVAL TO AUSCHWITZ ANYONE HOLDING A BABY AUTOMATICALLY WENT TO THE GASCHAMBER. THERE WERE CASES ON ARRIVAL THAT A WORKER AT THE TRAIN, WHO HAD BEEN THERE FOR YEARS, SEEING AN OLDER WOMAN BESIDE A YOUNG ONE HOLDING A BABY WOULD SHOUT AT THEM TO GIVE THE

BABY TO THE OLD ONE. I HEARD OF YOUNG MOTHERS HAVING BEEN SAVED THIS DESPARATE WAY. PAULA WAS YOUNG ENOUGH TO BE SENT "RIGHT" IF NOT FOR HOLDING A BABY.

PAULA HAD A BEAUTIFUL ACCEPTING PERSONALITY. THIS MOVE OF HERS REGARDING THE BABY WAS A FATEFUL MISJUDGEMENT.

PAULA DID NOT RUN BACK TO HER PARENTS, WHEN AFTER THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY HERMAN TOOK HER TO GYONGYOS, AND SURPRISED HER WITH SEVEN CHILDREN. SHE KNEW, SHE WAS MARRYING A WODOWER, BUT HAD NO IDEA ABOUT THE NUMBER OF CHILDREN, THE YOUNGEST BEING EIGHT MONTHS OLD.(?)

HERMAN STILL AT WAR WHEN THE CITY OF GYONGYOS BURNED DOWN IN NINETEEN SEVENTEEN. ALL PAULA COULD SAVE WAS A SEWING MACHINE AND THE CHILDREN. THEY LIVED IN A SCHOOL FOR SOME TIME AND SHE TOOK IN SEWING SO THE CHILDREN COULD EAT. THIS LEFT HER NO TIME FOR BOREDOM.

IT IS NOT CLEAR TO ME (ALL THESE WERE TOLD ME BY THE SISTERS AND BROTHERS AT DIFFERENT TIMES WHEN WE MET) WHEN THE TWO BROTHER AND SISTERS LEFT FOR AMERICA. BUT IT WAS BEFORE ELISABETH DID.

HERMAN HAD A MULTIMILLIONAIR BROTHER IN NEW YORK AND AN OTHER ONE WHO NEVER COULD MAKE ENDS MEET. WHEN THE FIRST TWO SISTERS CAME, THE RICH BROTHER WANTED THEM TO KEEP HOUSE FOR HIS FAMILY, TO BECOME MAIDS FOR THEM. BERTHA AND JOLAN HAD IDEAS ABOUT DIFFERENT WAYS OF LIVING IN AMERICA. BERTHA WAS A BEAUTIFUL GIRL AS ALL WERE AND SOON

SHE MARRIED A WELL-TO-DO-GENTLEMAN.

THE PROBLEM STARTED A FEW YEARS LATER. (AS IT WAS TOLD TO ME BY ELISABETH) THE POLICE CAME TO BERTA'S HOME FOR HER HUSBAND.

IT SO HAPPENED THAT THE LAWISH GIFTS, THE FURS, THE JEWELS, THE ORIENTAL RUGS WERE STOLEN ITEMS. THE HUSBAND WENT TO JAIL, BERTHA GOT A DIVORCE AND SOON MARRIED ANOTHER GENTLEMAN. THEY HAD A SON, ALL I KNOW ABOUT HIM, THAT WHEN HE WAS GROWN HE WAS IN BUTTON BUSINESS. BERTHA AND HUSBAND DIED AT AN OLD AGE.

JOLAN, BERTHA'S SISTER MARRIED ALSO A GENTLEMAN, WHO ACCORDING JOLAN COULD NOT MAKE A LIVING, AND THEY WERE SUPPORTED BY WELFARE. THEIR SON DR. STANLY SHALOFF IS A PROMINENT PERSON. HE WAS THE FIRST WHITE PROFESSOR TO TEACH AFRICAN STUDIES. HE ALSO WROTE BOOKS. HE AND HIS FAMILY LIVE IN W.D.C. AND HE WORKS FOR THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

WHEN ELISABETH WAS IN THE USA FOR A SHORT TIME, SHE SAW THAT HER HUSBAND IS NOT GOING TO SUPPORT HER AND THE CHILDREN, BEING VERY STINGY. WHEN SHE TOLD JOLAN ABOUT THIS, JOLAN WANTED TO TALK ELISABETH INTO ACCEPTING WELFARE. ELISABETH WAS A PROUD PERSON WHO DID NOT SEE HOW CAN ONE LIVE ON MONEY SHE DID NOT WORK FOR. SHE STARTED TO WORK IN A NECKTIE COMPANY, LATER FOR MAX, IN HIS GROCERY STORE.

THE TWO BROTHERS BECAME PAINTERS (HOUSE) AND BELONGED TO THE UNION. JACK DIED A YOUNG MAN. ALBIN MARRIED "FINI". JOSEPHIN WAS A JOYFUL PERSON, FROM VIENNA. SHE WORKED WITH A FASHION DESIGNER. ALBIN AND FINI LIVED A HAPPY LIFE. SHE STILL DOES.

JOSEPH WHO CAME TO THE USA IN FIFTYSEVEN, WAS A PERSON OF NO COMPARISON. MY HUSBAND AND JOSEPH WERE NOT ON THE BEST OF TERMS.

WHEN ONE JEWISH NEW YEAR WE WERE GOING HOME FROM THE TEMPLE, AS WE HAD TO PASS THEIR HOME, I TOLD MY HUSBAND "LET'S STOP AND WISH THEM A HAPPY NEW YEAR". HE PARKED THE CAR, WE ALL GOT OUT, HE LOCKED THE DOOR, THEN HE ANNOUNCED " I AM NOT GOING THERE, GET BACK IN THE CAR". WE DID, AND WE DROVE HOME.

NEXT DAY, ON MY WAY TO WORK I STOPPED AT HIS CORNER STORE ON SEVENTH AND WASHINGTON, TO WISH HIM A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

HIS ANSWER TO ME: "I SHIT ON YOU". (FREE TRANSLATION FROM HUNGARIAN.) JOSEPH AND HIS WIFE BARBARA HAD A SON . GABRIEL.

JOSEPH STILL COULD NOT FORGIVE HIMSELF FOR STEALING MY FAMILY'S INHERITANCE WHILE STILL IN HUNGARY.

LACI, AN OTHER BROTHER, WENT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MY HUSBAND, AND THEIR MAIN AMBITION WAS TO GO ON EACH OTHER'S NERVES WHICH WAS ACCOMPLISHED VERY SUCCESSFULLY. LACI AND HIS WIFE ERNA HAD A LOVELY DAUGHTER, AURELIA. SHE GOT MARRIED, AND HAD THREE CHILDREN. ALL VERY LOVABLE.

AFTER A FEW YEARS OF MARRIAGE, ELISABETH ASKED HER HUSBAND TO JUST WALK OUT AND DONT COME BACK. MR. DEUTSCH HAD A REQUEST. LET HIM SPEND THE PASSOVER, STARTING IN A FEW DAYS, SPENDING WITH HIS CHILDREN. HE DID. AND HE WALKED OUT, AND NEVER CAME BACK.

ELISABETH HAD A BOYFRIEND. MAX. SHE WORKED NOW FULL TIME IN HIS GROCERY STORE. MAX LOVED HER. HE LOVED HER UNTIL HE MET A RICH WIDOW. HE CLAIMED HE STILL LOVED ELISABETH, BUT JUST THE SAME HE MARRIED THE OTHER WOMAN. TOGETHER THEY OPENED A CHAIN OF GROCERY STORES (SUPERMARKETS?) AND BECAME EVEN RICHER.

A FEW YEARS LATER ELISABETH MARRIED A GENTLEMAN, JOE SOLLANDER, WHO CATERED TO ALL HER WISHES AS HE PROMISED WHEN HE ASKED HER TO MARRY HIM. JOE LOST HIS WIFE A FEW YEARS EARLIER.

SHE STARVED HERSELF TO DEATH. SHE CLAIMED, THAT THE HOUSE-KEEPER TRIED TO POISON HER.

WHEN ELISABETH MARRIED JOE, SHE MOVED INTO HIS HOUSE. IT WAS A THREE STORY BUILDING. THE FIRST, STORE AND STORAGE PLACE, AND A STUDIO APARTMENT. THE HOUSEKEEPER LIVED THERE.

AFTER A FEW MONTHS, AFTER ELISABETH MOVED IN, IT BECAME CLEAR TO HER THAT THE HOUSEKEEPER SUPPORTS HER WHOLE FAMILY IN GERMANY, FROM JOE'S STORE. THEY COULD NOT MAKE A LIVING BECAUSE OF THEIR NAZI BACKGROUND.

FIRST ELISABETH NOTICED THAT IN THE MORNING WHEN THEY OPENED THE STORE, THE SILVER MONEY (IT WAS STILL SILVER) SEEMED LESS, THAN THE NIGHT BEFORE. AS HER SUSPICION RIPENED, ONE DAY WHEN THE HOUSE-KEEPER WENT TO THE BEAUTY PARLOR, ELISABETH WALKED THROUGH THE DOOR AND LOOKED AROUND.. SHE PEEKED INTO A BOX. IT WAS FILLED WITH SILVER CHANGE. NOW JUST BEIN CURIOUS, SHE OPENED A FEW OTHER BOXES. WELL,,, THIS LADY HAD AN EXPENSIVE TASTE. THE BOXES WERE FILLED WITH THE MORE EXPENSIVE MERCHANDISE, LIKE COFFE BEANS, SARDINES, COCOA, CHOCOLATES AND THINGS SOLD IN GERMANY FOR BIG MONEY ON THE BLACK MARKET. SEEMED LIKE SHE MAILED THEM OUT WHEN THEY WERE NOT HOME. (THIS WAS IN NINETEENFIFTY-TWO)

WELL, ELISABETH CARRIED THE BOX OF SILVER WITH JOE'S HELP BACK IN THE STORE. WHEN THE LADY WAS BACK FROM THE BEAUTY SHOP, ELISABETH TOLD HER TO PACK AND TAKE WHAT BELONGED TO HER, AND WALK OUT.. DID JOE'S WIFE KNEW ABOUT HER DOING? DID SHE WANT TO POISON HER? WE WILL NEVER KNOW.

ELISABETH'S DAUGHTER GOT MARRIED IN THE MEAN TIME, AND HAD TWO DAUGHTERS. ARTHUR NEVER MARRIED. AS ELISABETH CONFINED IN ME, ARTHUR HAD ONE AMBITION IN HIS LIFE. IT WAS , TO PUT HER IN THE STATE HOSPITAL (MENTAL INST.). IT WOULD BE HIS REVENGE BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT SHE DID TO HIM, WHEN HE WAS SIXTEEN. ARTHUR FELT THAT SHE RUINED HIS LIFE WITH THIS.

SHE SIGNED A PAPER, A PERMISSION TO GIVE HIM ELECTRIC SHOCKS, THAT HE NEVER NEEDED. AT THAT TIME PEOPLE GETTING SHOCKS WERE NOT ANESTHETIZED BEFORE. ARTHUR HAD A DEADLY FEAR OF IT.

ELISABETH FINISHED HER LIFE IN A "HOSPITAL" NOT RECOGNIZING ANY OF HER FAMILY, EXCEPT RELIKE, (AURELIA) LACI'S DAUGHTER.

IF YOU ASK ME, ARTHUR WAS THE NICEST PERSON IN THE WHOLE FAMILY. EVEN THOUGH HE DID HAVE A GRUDGE MAYBE AN INTENTION OF REVENGE, HE DID NOT ACT ON IT. DID NOT DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT. HE WANTED TO "PAY BACK" THE CRIME, HE FELT HIS MOTHER COMMITTED AGAINST HIM WITH THE HELP OF HERRIETT, BUT HE DID NOT, HE WOULD NOT. I KNEW HIM.

IT ALL STARTED WITH THE TWO LADIES IN THE FAMILY, WHO DID NOT SEEM TO HAVE OTHER PLEASURE IN LIFE THAN TORTURING AND HECKING ARTHUR VERBALLY. ELISABETH DID THE SAME TO ME IN DIFFERENT STYLE AS YOU READ IT BEFORE. NO MATTER WHAT ARTHUR DID OR DID NOT DO, IT WAS THE SUBJECT TO THEIR CONSTANT CRITICISM.

AFTER A WHILE HIS SELF WORTH GONE, HE HAD NO WAY OF PROTECTING HIMSELF, BY PUTTING UP A FIGHT. ONE DAY, WHEN HE DID HIS USUAL CHORE IN HIS MOTHER'S GROCERY STORE, UNPACKING THE BOXES OF CANNED FOOD, AND PUTTING THEM ON THE SHELVES, THE TWO LADIES STARTED UP THE USUAL ABUSES. ARTHUR GOT SO ANGRY HEARING AGAIN AND AGAIN THAT HE WAS CRAZY, AND GOOD FOR NOTHING, THAT AFTER A WHILE

HE COULD NOT CONTAIN HIS ANGER, AND WHILE TURNING AROUND HE TREW A CAN OF BAKED BEANS IN THE DIRECTION OF HERRIETT, HIS TORMENTOR. IT SO HAPPENED THAT IT ACTUALLY HIT HER AND A TOOTH WAS BROKEN.

ELISABETH CALLED THE STATE HOSPITAL. THEY CAME IN NO TIME TO PICK UP ARTHUR. ARTHUR BEGGED THEM TO LISTEN TO HIM AND LET HIM EXPLAIN WHAT HAPPENED, BUT THOSE CAME FOR HIM WOULD NOT HEAR HIM OUT.

HE FOUND HIMSELF IN A STRAIGHT JACKET, AND TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL AS A DANGEROUS PERSON.

HE WAS GIVEN ELECTRIC SHOCKS THE OLD WAY.

THAT WAS THE END OF A LIVELY TEENAGER, WHO ALWAYS BROUGHT HOME GOOD GRADES FROM HIGH SCHOOL.

THERE WERE NO MORE GIRLS WANTED HIS COMPANY, KNOWING WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM.

YEARS LATER, WHEN HERRIETT WAS ALREADY A NURSE, I ASKED HER " WHAT WAS THE PROBLEM WITH ARTHUR?". SHE SAID "OH MY GOD, WE DID NOT REALIZE WHAT WE WERE DOING TO HIM." I ACCEPT NO EXCUSE FOR HURTING ANYONE. A FAMILY MEMBER AT THAT!!!!!!!

AND IT WAS ELISABETH WHO TOLD ME THIS STORY ABOUT ARTHUR.

HOW ABOUT IT?.

NOW BOTH ELISABETH AND ARTHUR ARE DEAD.

IT WAS INTERESTING FOR ME HOW ARTHUR DIED.

HE WAS TAKING MEDICINE FOR A LONG TIME, I DON'T KNOW WHAT FOR WHEN THE DOCTOR TOLD HIM , THAT HE WILL HAVE TO STOP TAKING IT SLOWLY, GRADUALLY. WHEN HE FINALLY DID, ELISABETH WAS NOT HAPPY ABOUT IT, AND CALLED THE DOCTOR FOR MORE OF THE SAME. THE DOCTOR REFUSED, SO ELISABETH GOT THE MEDICINE FROM ONE OF HER BROTHER, AND SNAKED IT INTO ARTHUR'S FOOD WITHOUT HIS KNOWLEDGE. HE WAS NOT AWARE OF IT.

A FEW YEARS LATER ELISABETH BROKE HER LEG. SHE WAS TAKEN TO A HOSPITAL, LATER NURSING HOME.

ALL OF A SUDDEN ARTHUR JUST DROPPED DEAD.

ELISABETH HAD NOW OTHER PROBLEMS, AS I SAID, SHE STARTED NOT RECOGNIZING PEOPLE. UNFORTUNATELY IT HAPPENED TO MORE THAN ONE FAMILY MEMBER, THAT DID NOT RECOGNIZE PEOPLE. IT IS TRUE THAT THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS DID NOT SEE EACH OTHER FOR YEARS.....

IT WAS VERY STRANGE TO LEARN ABOUT THIS FOR ME.

IN CSONGRAD OUR HOME WAS THE MEETING PLACE FOR THE FAMILY, FOR TWO REASONS. WE LOVED TO GET TOGETHER , AND NO ONE COULD AVOID US. WE LIVED IN THE VERY MIDDLE OF THE CITY. WE HAD A CONSTANT FLOW OF AUNTS, UNCLES AND COUSINS. THE ONLY PERSON WE HAD TO GO TO SEE WAS MY EIGHTY FOUR YEAR OLD GRANDMOTHER

IN JASZBERENY WE WENT FOR A WALK, TO THE "CORSO", BUT IN CSONGRAD ACTUALLY THERE WAS NO WAY AVOIDING IT. WE LIVED ONE HOUSE FROM IT. GRANDMOTHER LIVED AT THE END WHERE THE LARGE CHURCH WAS. ON THE WAY TO GRANDMA WE PICKED UP CAKE OR CHESTNUT CREAM FOR HER, DEPENDING ON THE SEASON, IF MY MOM DID NOT BAKE. SHE LOVED SWEETS SO....

IT DID NOT MATTER IF IT RAINED OR ICE OR SNOW WAS FALLING, WE WENT TO VISIT HER. SHE WAS A TINY PERSON, BUT MY DAD AND THE REST OF HER CHILDREN GREW TWICE HER SIZE, EXCEPT UNCLE IMRE. MY GRANDFATHER WAS TALL. MY FATHER KISSED HER HAND FIRST AND SO DID I, AND SHE MOVED HER HEAD TO KISS US LOVINGLY. THE OTHER CHILDREN VISITED HER DURING THE DAY.....IT MUST HAVE BEEN NICE FOR HER TO GET BACK NOW ALL THE LOVE, SHE SPENT ON THEM GROWING UP.

I REMEMBER HER FRAIL BODY, HER BEAUTIFUL VERY CURLY WHITE HAIR FIXED UP IN A BUN. SHE WAS FOREVER CROCHETING THE BEDSPRED AND BEDROOM CURTAINS, THAT HUNG FROM THE HIGH CEILLING TO THE FLOOR. ONLY ONE PANEL WAS STILL MISSING, BUT SHE COULD NOT FINISH IT.... AUSCHWITZ DID. I DONT THINK MY GRANDMA APPRECIATED THE POLITICAL SITUATION FULLY, UNTIL WE HAD TO MOVE TO THE GHETTO. MY AUNT OLGA TOOK HER HANDWROUGHT BRASS BED FOR HER, SO SHE COULD AT LEAST HAVE HER USUAL COMFORT AT NIGHT.. SOON ENOUGH SHE HAD HER TURN IN THE BRICK FACTORY WHERE SHE HAD THE EARTH, TO SLEEP ON FOR A WEEK.

POOR SWEET GRANDMOTHER. JUST THE WINTER BEFORE THIS, SHE HAD HER LONG FUR COAT CUT SHORTER, SO I COULD HAVE A FUR COLLAR ON MY WINTERCOAT. THESE COLLARS WERE NOT ONLY FOR DECORATIONS. WHEN TURNED UP THEY KEPT THE CHILLS OF THE HARD WINTERS OUT.

THIS WAS MY DAD'S MOTHER. MY MOM'S MOTHER GAVE ME LOVELY GIFTS ALSO. I NEVER DREAMED THAT THE MEMORY OF THEIR LOVING CARE WILL LAST ME THIS LONG. MY FIRST EARRINGS CAME FROM HER. THEY HAD THE SHAPE OF FORGET-ME-NOTS, AND WERE WITH BLUE STONES. MY FIRST RED LEATHER POCKET-BOOK ALSO CAME FROM HER, WHEN I WAS THREE. I COLLECTED " FILLERS" IN IT. AT THE TIME FIVE FILLER WAS WORTH A CENT. EVERY TUESDAY AND FRIDAY THE GATES WERE LEFT OPEN FOR THE BEGGERS TO COME IN, AND THE FILLERS WERE GIVEN TO THEM. FOUR FILLERS BOUGHT TWO POUNDS OF POTATOES, STAPLE FOOD OF HUNGARY, OR TWO POUNDS OF TOMATOES IN SUMMERTIME.

THE RED POCKETBOOK WAS JUST PART OF A GIFT PACKAGE, ONE OF THE MANY GIFTS SHE MAILED OUT BEFORE THE SPRING AND FALL HOLIDAYS. MY BROTHERS USUALLY GOT SHIRT MATERIALS OF FINE COTTON. WE KNEW WHEN THE PACKAGE WILL COME FROM OUR GRANDMA BUT WE DID NOT WAIT FOR ANYTHING ELSE, LIKE WE WAITED FOR THE JAM SHE COOKED FOR US. IT WAS THE MOST DELICIOUS JAM IN THE WHOLE WORLD.

AT ONE TIME I WAS VISITING MY RELATIVES IN SZEKESFEHERVAR, WHERE MY MOM CAME FROM. IT WAS A HOT SUMMER THAT YEAR, AND I TOOK MY GRANDMOTHER OUT TO A FAMOUS CAFE. THIS PLACE WAS ALMOST NEXT TO FIRST HUNGARIAN KING'S BURYING PLACE, ST. STEVEN. HE WAS THE ONE WHO CONVERTED THE COUNTRY TO CHRISTIANITY, IN ONETHOUSAND-ONE.

NEXT DAY GRANDMA HAD A SORE THROAT. SHE THOUGHT IT WAS FROM THE ICECREAM, AND ASKED ME NOT TO TELL ANYONE ABOUT HER HAVING IT, SINCE ICECREAM AT THAT TIME WAS FOR KIDS ONLY. BUT SHE WAS A MODERN LADY. I LOVED THE IDEA OF HAVING A SECRET WITH HER.

I ALSO LOVED THAT SHE ALWAYS SMILED AT ME, OR EVERY ONE?. I HAVE A PHOTO OF HER IN MY BEDROOM. AT THAT TIME PEOPLE WERE VERY SERIOUS LOOKING ON ALL PICTURES. IT SEEMS TO ME NOW THAT HAPPY LOOKS WERE SECONDARY TO SERIOUS LOOKS. BUT IN MY MIND SHE SMILES AT ME.

BOTH OF MY GRANDMOTHERS DIED IN THE GASCHEMBER OF AUSCHWITZ. WHEN I THINK OF THE OTHER THIRTYFIVE RELATIVES WHO ALSO DID (MY TWO BROTHERS WERE SHOT) I CAN ACTUALLY FEEL THEIR HORROR THEIR PAIN IN THE MIDDLE OF MY STOMACH. I THINK OF THEM EVERY DAY. MY HEART CRIES FOR THEM EVERY DAY, AND I PRAY FOR THEM EVERY DAY.

IT ALL HAPPENED FIFTYFIVE YEARS AGO. THE PAIN, THE TORTURE IS NOT GONE, AND IT DOES NOT SEEM, LIKE IT EVER WILL.

WHEN I WAS MARRIED FOR FIVE YEARS AND STILL DID NOT HAVE ANY CHILDREN, FRIENDS STARTED TO MAKE HINTS ABOUT IT. LATER THEY ASKED ME DIRECT QUESTIONS, THAT I ANSWERED AS IF TO GAIN TIME "NOT YET". BUT CLEARLY I WAS AVOIDING TO FACE, THAT IT WOULD BE A DISASTER IF MY CHILDREN INHERITED MY HEARING PROBLEM. (I HAD NO INFORMATION ABOUT DEAF EDUCATION AT THE TIME.) I MISSED HEARING SO MUCH.....I SUFFERED FROM IT AND I DID NOT WANT MY KIDS TO SUFFER.....

LATER WHEN I LEARNED THAT THIS KIND OF HEARING LOSS CANNOT BE INHERITED, I WAS READY FOR THE ADVENTURE OF MY LIFE.

TWO YEARS LATER I ANNOUNCED THAT I WAS GOING TO HAVE A BABY IN SIX MONTHS. YOU SHOULD HAVE SEEN THE RELIEF ON THE FACE OF MY FRIENDS. THEY WERE WORRIED ABOUT ME, AND THEY WERE EXTRA HAPPY THAT THERE WAS NOTHING WRONG WITH ME, PLUS I WAS GOING TO HAVE A BABY!!!!!!

WHILE I WAS PREGNANT, I WAS VERY HAPPY, AND NEVER FELT BETTER IN MY LIFE. MY LOW BLOOD PRESSURE USED TO BOTHER ME BEFORE, AND TOOK PILLS FOR IT. NOT ANY MORE. I HAD NORMAL BLOOD PRESSURE. I ALSO GAVE UP SMOKING, SO THE BABY WOULD NOT BE AFFECTED. THAT HELPED ME TOO.

I WENT TO CLASSES TO LEARN HOW TO TAKE CARE OF BABIES. I WAS THE YOUNGEST IN MY FAMILY AND HAD NO CHANCE TO EVEN HOLD A BABY. I ALSO HOPED THAT I WILL HAVE TWINS, BECAUSE MY MOM HAD A SET,

TO THE GREAT SORROW OF THE FAMILY ONLY PETER SURVIVED THE BLACK POX EPIDEMIC. BABY PAUL DIED AT THE AGE OF EIGHT MONTHS. MY PARENTS WERE HEARTBROKEN. THAT IS WHY THEY HAD ME LATER.

ABOUT A YEAR AGO A RESEARCH SURFACED ABOUT THE EFFECT OF DEATH ON THE SURVIVING TWIN. IT SEEMS THAT IT IS VERY COMMON TO BE PSYCHIC FOR THE SURVIVOR TWIN. IT SO HAPPENS THAT MY BROTHER PETER COULD PREDICT THINGS. WE WERE AMAZED BUT DID NOT MAKE A BIG THING OUT OF IT, UNTIL HE GUIDED THE POLICE TO ARREST THE MAN WHO BROKE INTO A STORE, BURGLERIZED IT, AND BEAT UP THE OWNER. MY BROTHER DREAMED IT AT THE SAME TIME IT HAPPENED. WE KNEW ABOUT IT BEFORE ANYONE IN THE VERY EARLY MORNING..

BUT BACK TO MY PREGNANCY, IT WAS THE FIRST TIME FOR ELISABETH TO ACCEPT ME AS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY, AND SHE KEPT ON ENTERTAINING ME WITH DIFFICULT CHILDBIRTH STORIES, INCLUDIDNG HER OWN THROUGHOUT MY PREGNANCY.

EVEN THOUGH MY HUSBAND MADE A DECLARATION THAT THE BABY WAS NOT HIS, HE WAS CRAZY ABOUT HER WHEN SHE WAS BORN, LOOKING LIKE HIM SO MUCH. DURING BIRTH, AT THAT TIME FATHERS HAD TO WAIT IN THE WAITING ROOM FOR FATHERS TO BE. BUT ELISABETH WAS BORED AND CAME IN FOR MY HUSBAND TO GO WITH HER TO SEE A MOVIE AT THE "Y". SO HE DID, BUT TOLD ME THAT "THE MOVIE WAS NOT GOOD". I WAS STUNNED!!!! I DID NOT CARE WETHER IT WAS ENTERTAINING FOR THEM OR NOT!!!!!!

I WAS SO HURT!!! I COULD NOT BELIEVE IT WAS HAPPENING TO ME!!!! WHY DID HE TELL IT TO ME ANYWAY????? I WOULD NOT HAVE KNOWN!!!

I JUST COULD NOT GET OVER THE FACT THAT HE WENT AWAY WITH HIS SISTER, THAT HE PREFERRED TO BE ENTERTAINED, INSTEAD OF WAITING FOR THE BIRTH OF OUR CHILD.

THIS WAS TO BE A CELEBRATION OF LIFE OVER DEATH.....

AND HE LOVED HIS, I MEAN MY BABY AND I WAS HAPPY HE DID.

I HAD A VERY LOVING FATHER AND I FELT SPECIAL BECAUSE OF THAT.

WHEN THE SECOND BABY WAS BORN, THERE WAS AN EVEN MORE OUT OF THIS WORLD REACTION FROM HIM.

ACCORDING TO HIM, THE BABY WAS NOT ONLY NOT HIS, BUT NOT MINE EITHER. HE SAID THE BABY DID NOT LOOK LIKE ANYONE IN HIS OR MY FAMILY. SHE MUST HAVE BEEN EXCHANGED FOR ANOTHER ONE , WHEN SHE WAS BORN. SOMEONE GOT OUR BABY, AND WE GOT A ¹⁵ ATRANGER ONE.

BUT I FELT THAT THIS WAS MY BABY, AND I LOVED HER SO EVEN BEFORE SHE WAS BORN. A FEW MONTHS LATER DEBBIE DEVELOPED THE SAME BEAUTIFUL CHIN MY MOM HAD, AND WAS I HAPPY!!!!!!

NOW, WHEN I THINK OF THE HISTORY OF HIS FAMILY, NOTHING SEEMS SO STRANGE ANYMORE.

stranger

WHEN I WAS MARRIED FOR ABOUT THIRTY YEARS TO MARTIN, SOMEONE ASKED ME, "HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN MARRIED.? MY REPLY WAS AUTOMATIC. I SAID "FOR THREE THOSAND YEARS."

NOT MUCH LATER I MET AN AMERICAN INDIAN MEDICINE MAN. I NEVER SAW HIM BEFORE.

SINCE I BECAME DEAF, I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO BECOME HEARING AGAIN, AT NO AVAIL.....THE MEDICINE MAN....

FIRST, HE SAID "WE HAVE TO SEE, WHERE IT ALL STARTED ".

HE PUT TWO FINGERS ON MY HAND, AND HE STARTED TO WRITE IN A TRANCE . WHEN HE STOPPED WRITING, HE READ IT TO ME. HE SAID "THREE THOUSAND YEARS AGO THERE WAS THIS YOUNG MAN, AN AMERICAN INDIAN, WHO WAS DISLIKED IN HIS TRIBE, AND COULD NOT FIND A GIRL WHO WOULD MARRY HIM. HE WENT AND STOLE A YOUNG GIRL FROM ANOTHER TRIBE. HE WAS VERY RUDE TO HER. HE BEAT HER. ON ONE OCCASSION HE HIT HER ON THE HEAD WITH A HARD OBJECT, AND SHE BECAME DEAF ON ONE EAR. WHEN SHE WAS FIFTYFOUR AND SHE HAD GROWN TWO CHILDREN AWAY FROM HOME, SHE GOT PNEUMONIA, AND DIED BECAUSE HER HUSBAND DID NOT TAKE CARE OF HER.

" SHE WAS YOU " THE MEDICINE MAN SAID..."SHE WAS YOU, AND THE MAN YOU ARE MARRIED TO WAS YOUR HUSBAND THEN."

I SAID " WAIT, WAIT, THAT IS MY LIFE STORY NOW ".

WHEN I LEFT HUNGARY IN FORTYSIX, IT WAS FOR ONE REASON; TO GO WITH MY TRIBE TO ISRAEL. MY HUSBAND, WHO WAS ANYWAY NOT VERY ANXIOUS TO GO THERE, WHEN THE WAR BROKE OUT, HE REFUSED TO DO SO.

I WANTED TO RUN AWAY AGAIN AND WENT TO REGISTER AT MY MAIDEN NAME, SUGAR, AT THE OFFICE, BUT SOMEONE RECOGNIZED ME, AND I WAS NOT ALLOWED TO GO WITHOUT MY HUSBAND. I HAD NO CHOICE. IN ITALY AT THE TIME THERE WAS NO SUCH THING AS DIVORCE... I HAD TO GO WITH HIM WHEREEVER HE WENT. IT WAS IN THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT.

AND SO I WAS PREVENTED TO BE WITH MY TRIBE....

AT TIMES HE WAS ALSO VERY RUDE TO ME. WHEN HE HIT ME THE FIRST TIME, I PROMISED TO CALL THE POLICE IF IT HAPPENS AGAIN.

IN WILMINGTON DEL. ONE COULD NOT GET A DIVORCE, UNLESS ONE LIVED THERE FOR THREE YEARS. IN A STRANGE COUNTRY I DID NOT KNOW WHERE TO GO FOR HELP. I HAD NO MONEY TO WALK OUT.

IN THE MEANTIME I HAD TWO CHILDREN. THEY WERE GROWN AND WERE AWAY AT COLLEGE. WHEN I WAS FIFTYFOUR I HAD PNEUMONIA.

MY HUSBAND DID NOT NOTICE, THAT I WAS IN BED FOR THREE DAYS WITH HUNDRED FOUR TEMPERATURE. ON THE FOURTH MORNING I ASKED HIM TO CALL THE DOCTOR. LET ME TELL YOU THAT I DID NOT HAVE A RELAY FOR TEL. CALLS AT THAT TIME. DR. PORT ASKED HIM " WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS" MY HUSBAND ANSWERED " LET ME ASK HER I DONT KNOW," WHEN I TOLD

HIM HOW I FELT, HE TOLD MY HUSBAND TO TAKE ME RIGHT AWAY TO THE HOSPITAL.

WHEN DR. PORT EXAMINED ME, HE SAID "ONE MORE HOUR AT HOME AND YOU ARE DEAD." MY LUNGS WERE FILLED WITH WATER.

I ALWAYS HAD A VERY GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR. I IMAGINED THAT IF I DID DIE, THE NEWSPAPERS WOULD HAVE HAD A FIELD DAY, BRINGING THE NEWS, " CONV.HOSP. ADMINISTRATOR'S WIFE DIES FROM NEGLECT " I COULD NOT HELP BUT HAVE A GOOD LAUGH THINKING OF THIS.

WHEN I TOLD THIS STORY TO THE MEDICINE MAN, HE SAID " THIS TIME YOU SURVIVED. IT IS A GOOD SIGN. NOW YOU HAVE TO LEARN THE LESSON." I ASKED HIM TO TEACH ME, BUT HE SAID THAT I WILL HAVE TO LEARN IT FROM AND BY MYSELF, THAT NO ONE CAN TEACH ME. IF I DON'T LEARN THE LESSON, I WILL REPEAT THE SAME PATTERN IN MY FUTURE LIVES.

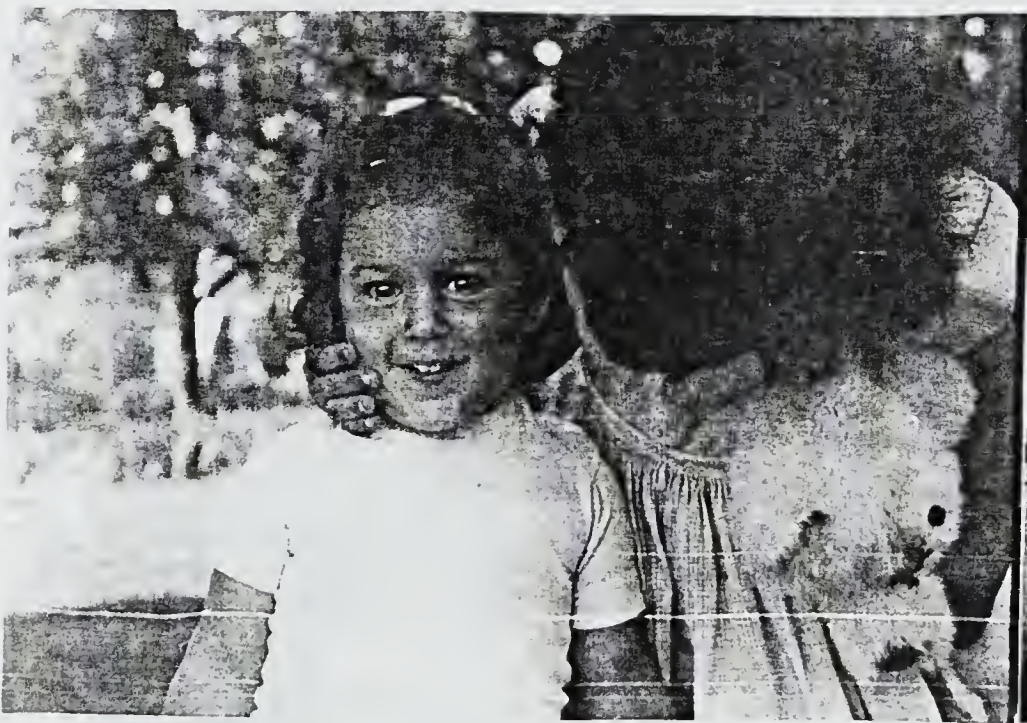
I TOLD ABOUT THIS HAPPENING TO FRIENDS AND THEY HAD ONE QUESTION: " HOW MUCH DID YOU PAY HIM ?"

WELL, HE DID NOT ASK ME FOR MONEY, BUT I OFFERED HIM SOME CHICKEN SOUP, AND HE ACCEPTED IT AND ENJOYED IT.

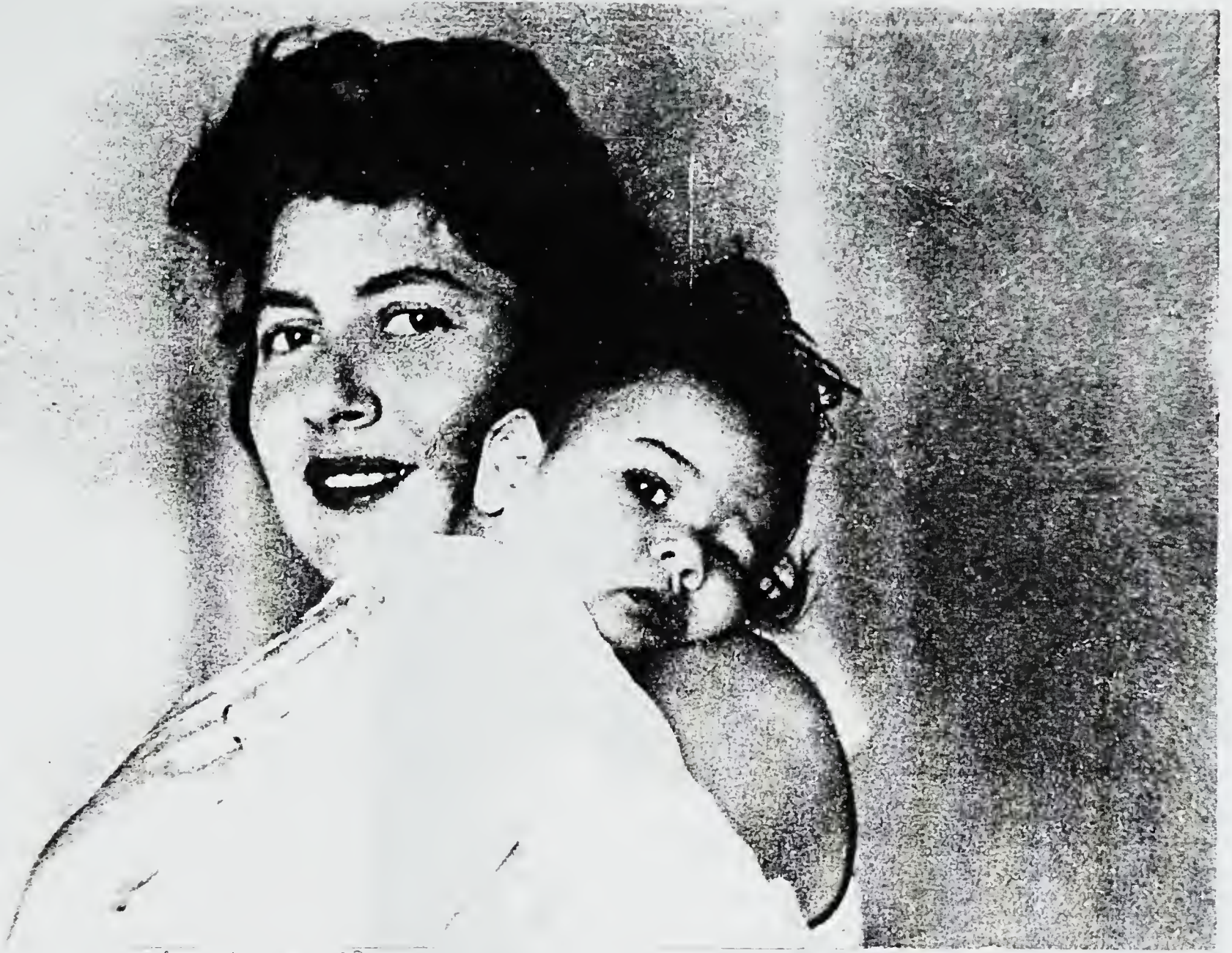
I AM DIVORCED FROM THIS HUSBAND OF MINE FOR A LONG TIME, AND I AM HAPPY WITH MY LIFE. MY CHILDREN MEAN THE MOST TO ME ,AND MY FRIENDS ARE THE GREATEST. THANKS GOD.



and he loved ...



Julie's secret.



Julie & Bobbie



Debbie and Nizzy Dagan Simonovics.

225H



Cousin
Marissa,
Jack
her son
and Julie



NIZZIE MY DOG

225AA

The day blows bright into the room
and I stretch and open my eyes
and a wet tongue is licking my face as if a dry
spot would attract demons.

Nizzie Dayan Simonowitz has done it again.

We run. She slides under the wind
around and around in the yard.
a bit of black and white blurs past
while something trails longer and longer —
and Nizzie settles down to her daily
bathroom tissue.

I look at her. "NIZZIE" I say
and her muscles tense, ready for a chase
ready to make an ass of me again as
she runs through my legs and into the house
under the sofa. She peeks out.

I fall, laughing on the living room floor
(or cursing)

And Nizzie Dayan Simonovitz crawls out
on her stomach
and comes to lick my nose.

My Dog!



"Concert Pianist" Julie

"Artist" Debbie.

Colwyck to Present Christmas Program

SWANWYCK—The Colwyck Elementary School will present a Christmas program tomorrow at 8 p.m. in the junior high school auditorium.

Selections will be given by the third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade choirs. Julia Simon, second grade, will give a piano solo, and the combined choirs of 200 voices will present the final number.



Julie 4, Debbie 1 year old, Dr. Prorah Simon.

AFTER THE HOLOCAUST THE SUN STARTED TO REALLY SHINE FOR ME AGAIN WITH THE BIRTH OF MY CHILDREN.

THEY WERE THE MOST IMPORTANT, THE HAPPIEST EVENTS I EXPERIENCED IN MY LIFE,

MY FIRST BABY, JULIE WAS BORN IN THE SEVENTH YEAR OF MY MARRIAGE. SHE WAS THE FIRST BABY I EVER HELD IN MY ARMS.

EVERYTHING ABOUT HER SURPRISED ME, ESPECIALLY THE WAY SHE LOOKED AT ME, WHEN I TALKED TO HER, AS IF SHE UNDERSTOOD WHAT I SAID. AT THE AGE OF ONE WEEK SHE FOLLOWED ME WITH HER EYES, WHEN I MOVED AROUND THE ROOM. A MONTH LATER WHEN I WAS FEEDING HER THE BOTTLE, SHE COULD NOT STOP SMILING EVEN WHILE EATING, AND SHE ACTUALLY DEVELOPED A " HALF SMILE,"

I TOOK HER AROUND THE HOME ON MY ARMS, SHOWING HER WHAT WAS THERE, AND TELLING HER THE NAMES OF THE ITEMS. I SAID " THIS IS A PICTURE OF MOMMY AND DADDY ". AND SO ON... WHEN SHE LEARNED THE WORD "THIS " IT BECAME FOR HER A QUESTION WORD. SHE POINTED AT THINGS AND SAID "THIS? ". I SAID " THIS IS A BLOCK." IT WAS A WOODEN NATURAL COLOR BLOCK WITH RED LETTER ON IT.

AND AGAIN JULIE POINTED AND ASKED " THIS? " AND I SAID AGAIN "THIS IS A BLOCK." BY THAT TIME JULIE WAS FRUSTRATED AND POINTED REPEATEDLY AT THE RED LETTER ON THE BLOCK, SAYING "THIS, THIS THIS?"

AND I FINALLY UNDERSTOOD HER QUESTION. SHE WANTED TO KNOW WHAT WAS THE RED THING ON THE BLOCK. I WAS VERY SURPRISED AT HER ABILITY AT SIX MONTHS TO NOTICE THAT THERE WAS SOMETHING ON THE BLOCK. IT WAS NOT JUST A BLOCK. IT IS A LETTER " D ", I TOLD IT TO HER. I PICKED UP ANOTHER BLOCK THAT HAD A "J" ON IT AND SAID THIS IS "J" JULIE'S LETTER TO MAKE SENSE FOR HER, AND I SHOWED HER AN "M" AND SAID THIS IS "M" MOMMIES LETTER , AND TO MY AMAZEMENT SHE SEEMED TO UNDERSTAND THE CONNECTION, AND FEVERISHLY SHE POINTED AT SEVERAL BLOCKS ONE AFTER THE OTHER AND ASKED "THIS THIS THIS?????. THERE WAS NO LIMIT TO HER CURIOSITY.

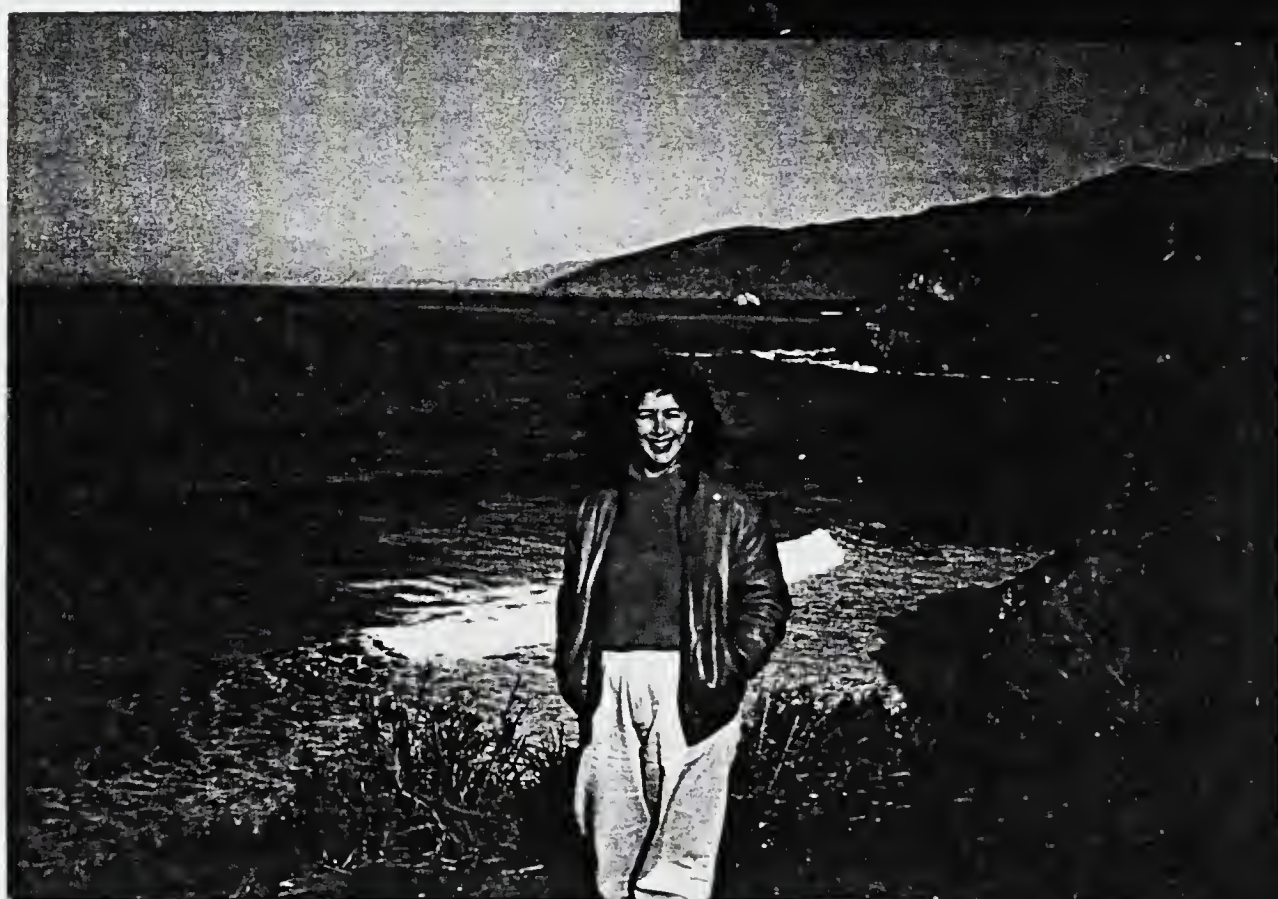
AT EIGHT MONTHS SHE COULD PICK OUT SEVEN LETTERS, NOT MISSING ANY. AT THE AGE OF ONE YEAR SHE KNEW THE ALPHABET MINUS "X". WE LOST THE "X" BLOCK.

JULIE WAS ALSO ENJOYING MUSIC. I GOT HER THE POPULAR RECORDS FOR CHILDREN. SHE GOT A RECORDPLAYER FROM HER DADDY, THAT SHE HERSELF OPERATED IN A MANNER, THAT WHEN DEBBIE STARTED TO USE IT, THE RECORS HAD NO SCRETCHES ON THEM. NOT SURPRISINGLY WHEN JULIE'S NOSE LEVEL CAME UP TO THE PIANO KEYS LEVEL, SHE STARTED TO PICK OUT THE NOTES, THAT SHE HEARD ON HER RECORDPLAYER, AND LATER ON OURS.

THESE EXPERIENCES BROUGHT THE PLEASURES TO MY LIFE THAT I MISSED ELSEWHERE, AND I NEEDED SO BADLY.

227A

Julie and
Bill



and I.



WHEN DEBBIE CAME ALONG SHE JUST ADDED TO THESE FEELINGS, SINCE SHE TOO WAS A VERY WARM CHILD OF GREAT DIFFERENT THINGS.

SHE WAS A CHILD OF GREAT CALM AND PATIENCE. SHE HAD A REMARKABLE ATTENTION SPAN, THAT AMAZED ME. SHE HAD A FLAIR FOR ART AT A VERY EARLY AGE. DEBBIE DID NOT COLOR COLORING BOOKS, SHE DREW HER OWN PICTURES. SHE ALSO TOOK INTEREST IN NATURE, LOOKING AT THE LEAVES OF THE TREES AT GREAT LENGTH. AND AS I SAID TO A VISITING FRIEND SHE NEVER NEEDED AN EXPLANATION OF WHO GOD WAS. LATER IN HER LIFE WHEN SHE ALREADY HAD HER PHD. IN PSYCHOLOGY, SHE WROTE A CHAPTER IN A BOOK. THE TITLE OF HER CHAPTER " SOLUTION FOCUSED THERAPY AS A SPIRITUAL PATH." I WAS NOT SURPRISED. I HAD A FEELING FROM THE VERY START, THAT CHILDREN, INCLUDIDNG MY CHILDREN, HAVE A MUCH DEEPER UNDERSTANDING, THAN GIVEN CREDIT FOR. JULIE'S WAY OF MUSIC MAKING , USED TO MOVE ME TO TEARS, WHILE I COULD STILL HEAR. SHE IS A VERY SUCCESSFUL MUSIC TEACHER AT SCRIPPS WHERE SHE STUDIED, IN CLAREMONT.

IT MAKES ME SAD WHEN I THINK OF THE GREAT LOSS. MY CHILDREN ARE DEPRIVED OF THE LOVE MY PARENTS AND BROTHERS COULD HAVE GIVEN THEM DID THEY SURVIVE. MY BROTHERS WOULD HAVE ENRICHED THEIR LIVES LIKE THEY DID MINE, BEING SO LOVING , GOOD, AND ARTISTIC.

AFTER SO MANY YEARS , I STILL REMEMBER HOW THEY USED TO LOOK AT ME THEIR EYES FULL OF LOVE. IN FACT WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES I CAN CONJURE UP AND LOOK AT MY FAMILY. MY FATHER , THE OLDEST ONE WAS TWENTY YEARS YOUNGER WHEN HE WAS MURDERED, THAN I AM NOW.

MY FAMILY NEVER GREW OLD FOR ME, AND EVEN THOUGH MY MOM WOULD BE ONEHUNDRED YEARS OLD THIS YEAR I MISS HER AS A FORTYSIX YEARS OLD, AND MY BROTHER AS A NINETEEN YEARS OLD, WHEN I SAW HIM LOOKING AT US FOR THE LAST TIME, WHEN SAYING GOODBYE AS HE WAS TAKEN FROM THE GHETTO, AND LATER SHOT.

I CLOSE MY EYES, AND THERE THEY ARE LOOKING AT ME WITH LOVE THAT PULLED ME THROUGH MANY LOVELESS YEARS. THEIR LOVE STILL NOURISHES ME,

BUT THEIR MOUTHS ARE CLOSED, AND THEY ARE SILENT.

AFTER JULIE WAS BORN I NEEDED TO WORK AT HOME. IT WAS NOT BECAUSE MY HUSBAND DID NOT MAKE PLENTY OF MONEY, BUT BECAUSE I ASKED HIM TO GIVE ME THREE DOLLARS OF POCKET MONEY A WEEK, HE REFUSED SAYING: " I DONT BELEIVE IN SEPARATE MONEY, ALL MONEYS ARE OURS, AND I KEEP THEM IN MY POCKET." HE MUST HAVE BEEN SCARED OF THE IDEA THAT I WILL BUY MYSELF ICECREAM. HE SHOPPED FOR FOOD.

WHEN ONE OF OUR FRIENDS HEARD ABOUT THIS, HE OFFERED TO SEND ME MONEY EVERY MONTH. HE TOLD ME TO OPEN AN ACCOUNT IN THE BANK, HE WILL TRANSFER THE MONEY, AND NO ONE HAS TO KNOW ABOUT IT. OF COURSE I HAD NO INTENTION TO ACCEPT IT, BUT HIS OFFER MADE ME THINK OF MY REAL POSITION REGARDING MY HUSBAND. I JUST COULD NOT COUNT ON HIM.

WORKING AT HOME WAS A PROBLEM, BECAUSE THE ONLY OPTION WAS LAMPSHADE MAKING. IT NEEDED A LOT OF PINS IN THE PROCESS. I WAS AFRAID OF PINS IN THE HOME, WHERE IT COULD ACCIDENTLY GET TO JULIE, NO MATTER HOW CAREFUL ONE IS.

I TALKED TO DOROTHY, ASKING HER IF SHE HAD ANY WORK FOR ME?. WHAT I HAD IN MIND WAS, THAT I WILL WORK OUT A WAY SOMEHOW TO WORK WITHOUT PINS. IT TOOK SOME TIME TO TEACH MYSELF BUT IT WAS FINALLY WORKING OUT.

DOROTHY CAME EVERY MONDAY BRINGING ME WORK, AND PICKED THEM UP READY EVERY FRYDAYS. I DID NOT HAVE TO ASK MY HUSBAND FOR POCKET MONEY AGAIN, UNTIL LATER WHEN I HAD TO WORK FOR HIM AGAIN AND THE PAIR OF SHOES I HAD, SUDDENLY GAVE OUT, WENT TO PIECES ON A STORMY DAY I HAD TO GO OUT. HE GAVE ME MONEY FOR SHOOES.

IT WAS A DAY WHEN THE STORES WERE OPEN AT NIGHT. HE WAS VISITING THE NEIGHBOR WITH JULIE , WHILE I WENT SHOPPING . NEXT DAY THE NEIGHBOR CAME OVER FOR COFFEE, AND WAS TELLING ME THAT,

"MARTIN SAID, THAT HE GAVE YOU MONEY AND IT WAS BURNING YOUR POCKET, SO YOU HAD TO GO AND SPEND IT RIGHT AWAY." I THANKED EDITH FOR THE INFO AND I AVOIDED ASKING FOR MONEY THE REST OF OUR MARRIED LIFE.

IT WAS VERY LUCKY FOR ME THAT THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT STARTED TO GIVE ME RESTITUTION AROUND THIS TIME, EVEN THOUGH VERY LITTLE. AS IT CAME EVERY MONTH, INTO AN ACCOUNT I OPENED, I DID NOT FEEL LIKE A BEGGER ANYMORE WITH A HUSBAND WHOSE PLEASURE WAS SHOPPING, AND GETTING ALL THE TOYS (HIS WORD) HE THOUGHT HE NEEDED.

A FEW MONTHS AFTER I WENT TO WORK FOR DOROTHY, SHE RAN OUT OF SILKSHADE ORDERS, AND COULD NOT KEEP ME ON THE PAYROLL. SHE HAD A PERMANENT WORKER, NAMED HELEN TO KEEP HER BUSY. I STARTED TO WORK FOR THE ROBINSONS OF WILMINGTON ON WASHINGTON ST. THIS WAS A PART TIME JOB, WHILE I WENT TO SCHOOL IN PHILADELPHIA, AS I SAID BEFORE.

I ALSO WORKED FOR THE WALSH ADVERTISING AGENCY, AFTER FINISHING SCHOOL. THIS AGENCY SUPPLIED CLOTHES FOR THE BEAUTY QUEENS, MADE OF EVERGLAZE AND EVERFAST. I WORKED THOSE CLOTHES TO PERFECTION FOR THE CONTESTS IN ATLANTIC CITY. OF COURSE I MADE SOME VERY NICE MONEY.

MY HUSBAND WAS ALWAYS UNHAPPY WHEN I MADE MORE MONEY THAN HE DID. IT STARTED IN ITALY, WHEN HE ACTUALLY TOOK A PART FROM MY SEWING MACHINE AND HACKED IT TO PIECES WITH A HAMMER.

I HAD THIS IDEA THAT I FINALLY WANTED TO SLEEP BETWEEN SHEETS AGAIN. WE DID NOT HAVE ANY, SINCE HIS SALARY IN THE CAMP OFFICE WAS HARDLY ENOUGH FOR BREAD AND BUTTER. OHHH, YES, WE LOVED BUTTER, AND WOULD HAVE EATEN A LOT MORE. SO I WAS TRYING TO PUT MONEY TOGETHER FROM SEWING, TO BUY SOME SHEET MATERIAL, WHICH I EVENTUALLY DID.

I JUST LOVED TO SLEEP BETWEEN WHITE COTTON SHEETS, AFTER FOUR YEARS OF NOT HAVING ANY.

IT WAS A FEW YEARS LATER IN WILMINGTON WHEN HE WAS DISPLEASED WITH MY MONEY MAKING, THAT HE HAD A BRILLIANT IDEA, THAT I SHOULD LEARN UPHOLSTERY SEWING. THE REASON AS HE TOLD ME, THAT MY MAKING MORE MONEY TAKES AWAY FROM HIS " MANLINESS " FERFIASSAG, IN THE HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE. WELL IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT HOW HE FELT, HAVING HAD A VERY LOW SELF ESTEEM FROM THE BEGINNING. SO I GAVE UP MY WORK THAT I LOVED AND WENT TO LEARN UPHOLSTERY SEWING AT MAX STERNBERG, HIS BOSS AND IDOL AND WHOSE LIFE EXAMLE INSPIRED HIM SO, THAT HE COPIED IT TO OLD AGE.

SO I GAVE UP MY LOVE FOR SILK, WORKING WITH DESIGN, FOR DUSTY UPHOLSTERY MATERIAL AND NAGUAHIDE.

MY HUSBAND STARTED TO WORK FOR HIMSELF AND IT ALSO WENT NOW, DELIVERING THE UPHOLSTERED SOFAS AND CHAIRS, AT TIMES TO THE SECOND FLOOR.

I WAS STILL NOT STRONG ENOUGH (MAYBE NO OTHER WOMAN WAS FOR FURNITURE DELIVERY) WITH MY BACKGROUND OF FIVE YEARS OF STARVING NOT THAT LONG BEFORE. BUT AS MY HUSBAND TOLD ME, HE COULD NOT FIND ANYONE ELSE TO HELP HIM AND THE FURNITURE WAS PROMISED ON THAT DATE.

IT WAS ALWAYS THE SAME.

SOON THERE WAS NOT A JOINT IN MY BODY, THAT DID NOT HURT. WHEN I TOLD ABOUT IT TO MY HUSBAND, HE DIAGNOSED IT "RHEUMASISM".

BY THE TIME I HAD BOTH MY GIRLS IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR ME TO LIFT THEM, NOT BECAUSE OF THEIR WEIGHT, BUT THE MOVEMENT HURT ME BADLY. I HAD SO MUCH PAIN, THAT I HAD TO TAKE PAIN KILLER MEDICINE. THE MEDICINE GAVE ME STOMACH INFLAMMATION. THE CHOICE WAS PAIN.

SINCE I WAS NOT ABLE TO DO CERTAIN MOVEMENTS, MY SHOULDERS GREW TOGETHER WITH TIME. LATER I SPENT A PAINFUL WEEK AT THE CEDARS SINAI HOSPITAL WHEN ONE WAS BROKEN UNDER ANASTHESIA. LATER THE OTHER WAS BROKEN GRADUALLY WITH PAINFUL PHYSICAL THERAPY.

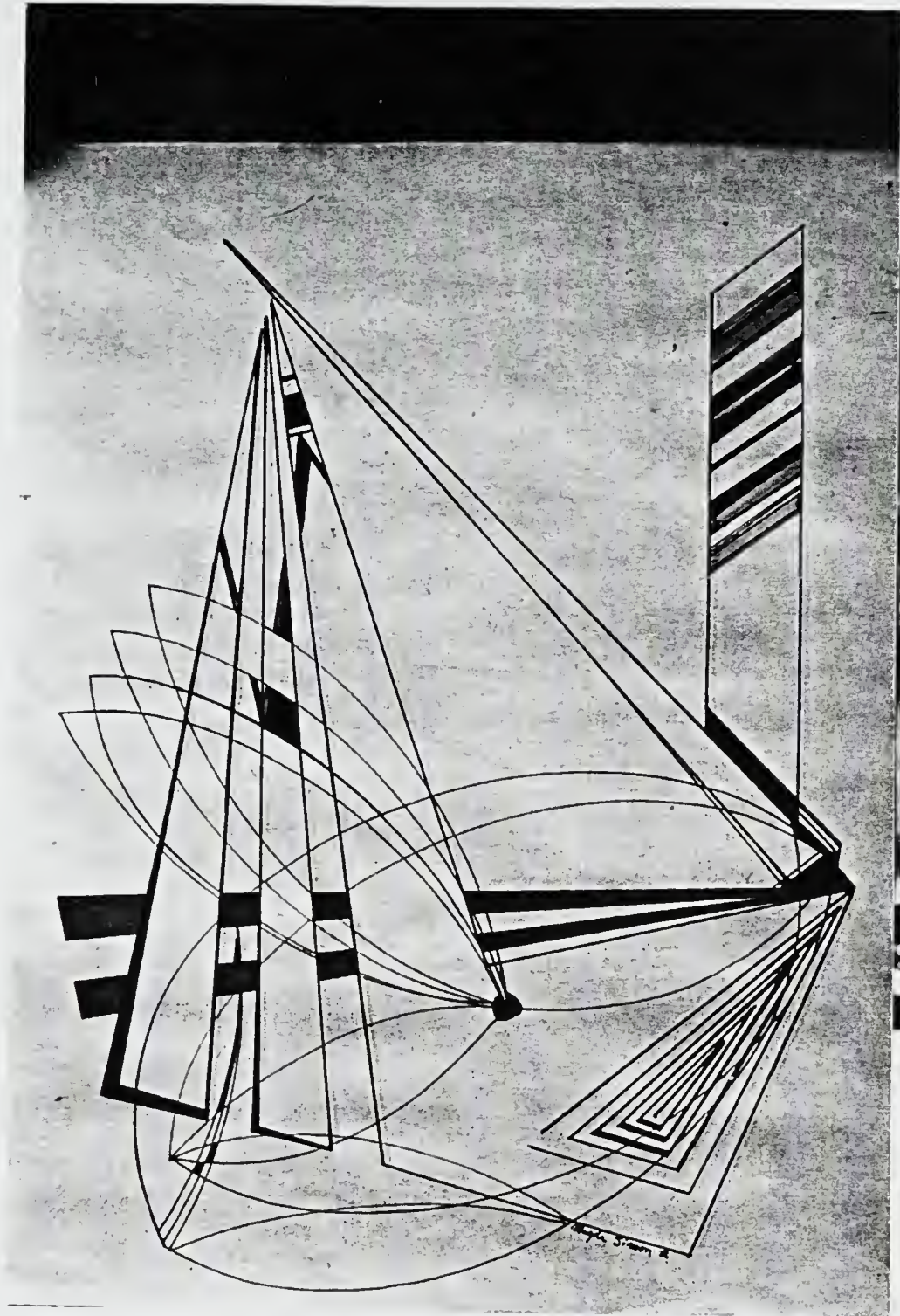
WHEN I WAS FORTYNINE YEARS OLD I WENT TO THE REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT, BECAUSE I COULD NOT WORK WITH SCISSORS, OR NEEDLES FOR SO MUCH PAIN. THE DOCTOR WHO DID THE EXAM SAID, BEFORE HE KNEW WHAT

I WAS WORKING BEFORE, " YOU HAVE THE CONDITION OF A RETIRED HEAVY INDUSTRIAL WORKER."

MY ADVISER MS. NOBLE ASKED ME, IF I WOULD LIKE TO LEARN LIP-READING. MY HEARING WAS ALL GONE BY THEN. I STARTED A CLASS WITH NINE OTHER STUDENTS AND TWO TEACHERS. BY THE END OF THE COURSE THERE WAS ONE STUDENT AND TWO TEACHERS LEFT. MS. NOBLE SAW THIS A SIGN THAT I WILL STICK WITH WHATEVER I START, AND SHE TOLD ME THAT SHE WILL ENROLL ME AT NORTHRIDGE UNIVERSITY FOR A SEVEN WEEK SIGNLANGUAGE COURSE. BY THE END OF THE COURSE I WAS READY TO MAKE AN ENTRANCE EXAM, FOR STUDYING , FOR EVENTUALLY AN ART THERAPIST DIPLOMA.

I DID NOT HAVE A H.S. DYPLOMA . I WAS IN AUSCHWITZ WHEN I WAS SIXTEEN. I HAD TO PASS A TEST FIRST IN SIGN LANGUAGE. INTERPRETERS COST A LOT OF MONEY FOR THE SCHOOL AND ONE HAD TO ABLE TO UNDERSTAND THEM BEFORE THE ENTRANCE EXAM TEST WAS TAKEN. I PASSED BOTH WELL AND ENLISTED IN MY FIRST COLLAGE CLASSES WHEN I WAS FIFTY YEARS OLD.

MS. NOBLE TOLD ME TO STUDY ART AND PSYCHOLOGY TO BECOME A THERAPIST. IN THE FIRST SEMESTER I GAVE MYSELF AN ENDURANCE TEST BY TAKING SEVENTEEN UNITS. IT WAS A LITTLE OVERWHELMING WITH THE TRIP TWO HOURS BACK AND FORTH, BUT BY THE END OF THE YEAR I WAS ON THE DEANS LIST.



Works That I Have done ..



BEFORE I ENROLLED IN DR. LEE'S PSYCHOLOGY CLASS I HAD AN AN INTERESTING CONVERSATION WITH HIM. I ASKED HIM "HOW HARD WAS HIS CLASS FOR DEAF STUDENTS, WHAT WAS HIS EXPERIENCE.? HE TOLD ME THAT THEY ALL FAILED, THAT EVERYONE FAILED THAT FAR. AND I REPLIED "YOU CANNOT COUNT ON ME TO FAIL" AND WE BOTH HAD A GOOD LAUGH.

WHEN HE WROTE ON MY TEST FOR THE SECOND TIME "YOURS WAS THE BEST AGAIN ", I WENT TO HIM AND ASKED HIM, DOES HE KNOW MY NAME? HE SAID " NO " (WE WERE SEVENTY STUDENTS IN THAT CLASS) HE SAID "WHY?" " BECAUSE I DONT WANT SPECIALTREATMENT BECAUSE I AM DEAF." DR.LEE SAID THAT HE WOULD NOT DO THAT. AND I WAS REALLY HAPPY ABOUT IT. IT GAVE ME MORE CONFIDENCE. AND DONT FORGET THE CHALLENGE IT WAS FOR ME TO GO TO CLASSES WITH CHILDREN JUST OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL, AND HEARING AT THAT.

SINCE I HAD THE BEST OF GRADES I WAS ALLOWED TO CHOOSE ANY OF THE CLASSES EVEN IF I WAS THE ONLY DEAF PERSON THERE. A DEAF STUDENT HAD TO TAKE CLASSES WITH OTHER DEAF STUDENTS IF THE GRADES WERE NOT THAT GOOD. IT WAS FOR ME A REWARD FOR MY GOOD GRADES.

I ENJOYED TO GO TO SCHOOL, AFTER SO VERY MANY YEARS NOT DOING WHAT I REALLY WANTED.

THE SHOCK CAME WHEN I GRADUATED CUM LAUDE AND I WAS READY TO GO FOR MY MASTERS. I WAS TOLD BY THE REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT

DON'T SPONSOR THE TWO YEARS IT TAKES TO GET A DEGREE. I NEEDED FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS FOR IT, AND I DID NOT HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO LIVE ON, SINCE MY DIVORCE TOOK PLACE. I HAD TO FIGURE OUT WHAT TO DO.

MS. NOBEL WAS GONE AND THE NEW ADVISOR DID NOT KNOW THAT SHE DID NOT INFORM ME ABOUT THEIR POLICY, SO GETTING BACK TO SCHOOL WAS OUT.

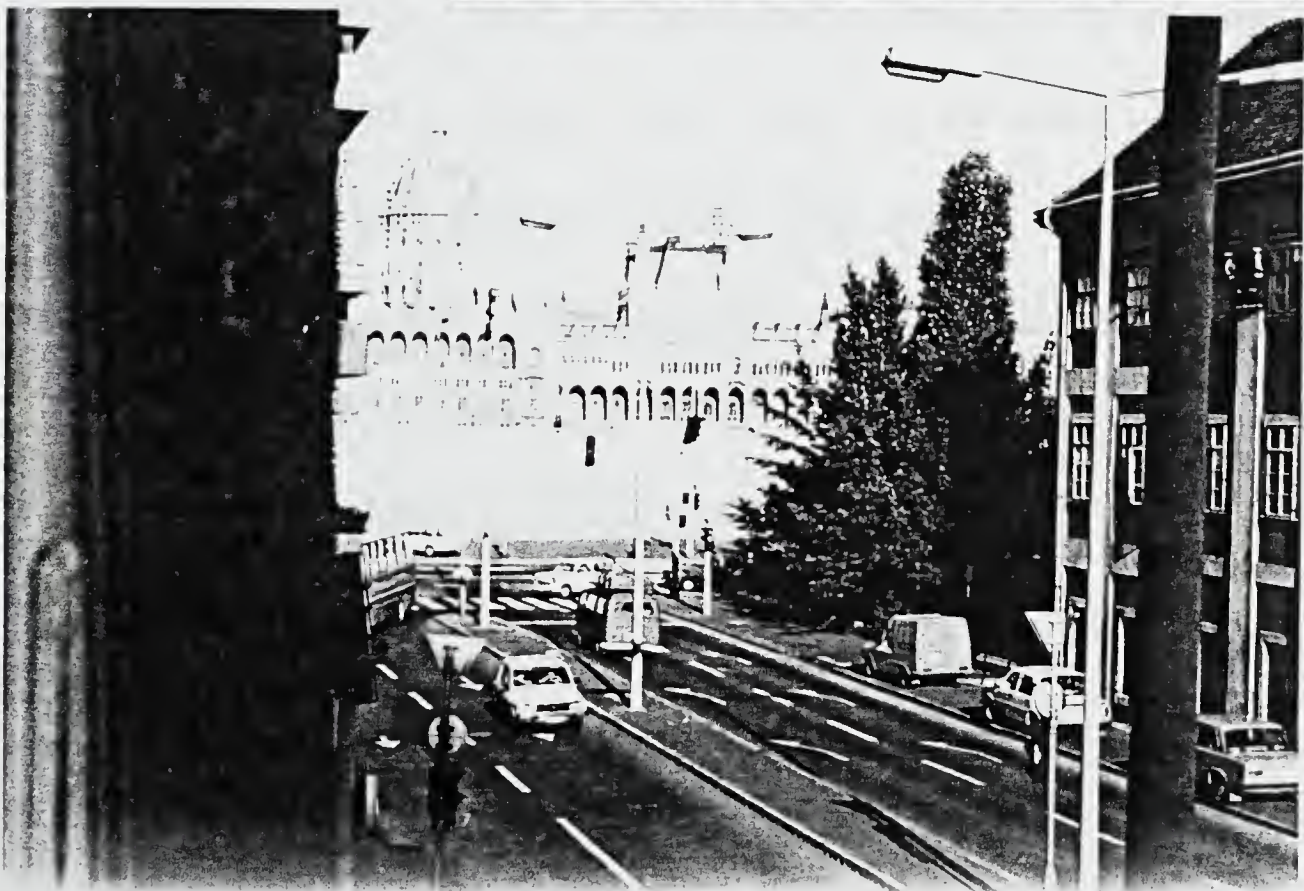
I KNEW SOMEONE WHOSE MOTHER HAD A ROOM TO LET IN BUDAPEST. I COULD LIVE THERE UNTIL I HAD ENOUGH MONEY TO LAST ME UNTIL I GET S.S. WHEN I WILL BE SIXTYTWO. I RENTED MY HOME HERE AND MOVED TO BUDAPEST, WHERE LIVING WAS SO CHEAP THAT I WAS ABLE TO BUY SEVEN YOGURT FOR ONE DOLLAR. THAT WAS SEVEN BREAKFAST. AT THE END OF A YEAR AND HALF I HAD SIXTEEN THOUSAND DOLLARS SAVED UP . I WAS ABLE TO COME HOME. I MISSED MY GIRLS SO, AND MY FRIENDS.

WHEN IN BUDAPEST I DID NOT STAY IN THE SAME ROOM I RENTED SIGHT UNSEEN. I WENT TO THE TOURIST OFFICE AND ASKED THEM FOR A ROOM WITH LARGE WINDOWS, AND WAS ADVISED TO LOOK AT THIS PLACE.

THE LANDLADY WAS ABOUT MY AGE. SHE MUST HAVE BEEN A STUNNING BEAUTY WHEN SHE WAS YOUNG. WHEN SHE OPENED THE DOOR SHE LET ME IN TO A FANSHAPED ROOM THROUGH A WIDE HALL. I KNEW RIGHT AWAY THAT I WANTED TO LIVE THERE, WHILE IN HUNGARY.



The view
from my
window in
Budapest.



FROM THE WINDOW ON THE LEFT I COULD SEE THE DANUBE AND THE PARLIAMENT, WHICH IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL PARLIAMENT IN EUROPE OR MAYBE THE WORLD ?. MY OTHER VIEW WAS AN ANCIENT STREET LEADING INTO A FAMOUS SQUARE WITH CHURCHES, SO OLD AND DIGNIFIED. ON THE SQUARE, WHICH WAS HALF BLOCK DISTANCE FROM MY PLACE ONE HAD ACCESS TO ALL KINGS OF TRANSPORTATION. ALSO A SUPERMARKET WAS THERE, WHERE ONE COULD FIND THE BEST OF FRESH FOOD GROWN BY PRIVATE FARMERS, AND ALSO DELICACIES FROM FOREIGN LANDS.

I LOVED THE VIEW. THE DANUBE CHANGED CONSTANTLY. IT WAS MOST BEAUTIFUL IN THE LATE AFTERNOON, WHEN THE RAYS OF THE SUN REFLECTED FROM THE PARLIAMENT WINDOWS MADE THE RIVER'S COLOR MOLTEN GOLD. IN WINTERTIME THE DANUBE FROZEN STIFF GAVE RIDES TO THE WIND-CARRIED SNOW.

I BECAME FRIENDS WITH THE LANDLADY. SHE HAD A SECRET DURING THE WAR. THEY WERE HIDING A GERMAN JEWISH FAMILY'S THREE MEMBERS. THIS FAMILY CAME FROM BERLIN TO BUDAPEST IN THE VERY LAST MINUTE BEFORE IT WAS TOO LATE TO ESCAPE.

THE RABBI BERGER AND THREE DAUGHTERS KATI, ERZSEBET, AND MRS. SILBER CAME TO BUDAPEST TO ESCAPE THE NAZI TREATMENTS. THE RABBI DID NOT LIVE LONG, BUT THE THREE GIRLS WERE HIDDEN BY ERZSEBET ERTL AND HER HUSBAND, JONAS ERTL.

I COLLECTED THE STORIES THE LANDLADY TOLD ME, AND WROTE THEM INTO ONE STORY AND READ IT TO HER. SHE SAID, THAT WAS HOW IT ALL HAPPENED.. SHE SHOWED ME THREE BEAUTIFUL HAND MADE STIRLING SILVER TRAYS, THAT SHE GOT FROM THE THREE JEWISH LADIES ON HER WEDDING DAY. THIS IS WHAT SHE RELATED TO ME WORD BY WORD.

MY STEPMOTHER WOKE ME UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT, HER FINGER ON HER MOUTH TO WARN ME TO KEEP QUIET. I GOT OUT OF BED, AND SHE LED ME TO THE NEXT ROOM HOLDING MY HAND. MY FATHER WAS SITTING AT THE TABLE WITH A VERY SERIOUS EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE.

WHEN WE SAT DOWN, MY MOTHER STARTED TO TALK IN A NEAR WHISPER, BUT SHE MADE SHURE, THAT I LISTEN TO EVERY WORD. IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT- SHE SAID - THAT I UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION, SINCE OUR LIVES WERE AT STAKE. IF I EVER TELL ANYONE, WE WERE FINISHED, INDICATING IT WITH A FINGER PULLED ACROSS HER THROAT.

AND THEN, SHE STARTED TO TELL ME, THAT SHE WAS HIDING THREE JEWISH WOMEN IN OUR ATTIC ROOM.

SHE WORKED TOGETHER WITH ONE OF THEM AT HER OFFICE, WHEN THE JEWS HAD TO START WEARING YELLOW STARS TO DIFFERENTIATE THEM FROM NON JEWS. THIS WOMAN IN THE OFFICE WAS VERY DEPRESSED.

SHE CRIED AND ASKED MY STEPMOTHER TO SAVE HER AND HER SISTERS.

THEY KNEW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GERMAN JEWS.

MY STEPMOTHER WAS NOT THE KIND OF WOMAN WHO COULD SAY NO TO A REQUEST LIKE THAT. ON THE NIGHT THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO GO AND MOVE INTO THE GHETTO OF BUDAPEST, SHE MOVED THEM UP INTO THE ATTIC ROOM, IN GREAT SECRECY. NO ONE SUPPOSED TO KNOW THEY MOVED IN.

IT WAS A VERY SMALL ROOM EVEN FOR ONE PERSON, BUT THOSE LADIES HAD NOT UTTERED ONE COMPLAINT ABOUT IT, ALL THOSE MONTHS THEY LIVED UP THERE, LOCKED UP. THE ONLY REQUEST THEY MADE THAT WE SHOULD GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO DO, SO THEY DONT GO CRAZY FROM DOING NOTHING. THEY ASKED US TO GIVE THEM SOMETHING TO SEW, JUST ANYTHING. SO WE GOT TOGETHER WHAT WE HAD TORN, AND THEY MENDED OUR STOCKINGS, AND OUR CLOTHES, BUT WE JUST DID NOT HAVE THAT MUCH AND I WAS VERY SAD ON ACCOUNT OF THEM.

THEY WERE LOCKED UP LIKE CRIMINALS IN A TINY ROOM, THAT HAD VERY NARROW WINDOWS LOOKING OUT TO THE SHAFT WALL WHICH HAD WINDOWS TO ALL THE W.C. S OF THE WHOLE HOUSE. THIS WAS THE TOP FLOOR SO THE AIR MOVED TO THEM LIKE IN A CHIMNEY.

IN SUMMERTIME, AT TIMES WHEN THE HEAT WAS UNBEARABLE DOWN-STAIRS, WHERE WE LIVED, WE LOOKED AT ONE ANOTHER AND TURNED OUR EYES UP AS IF TO SAY " HOW CAN THEY TAKE IT UNDER THE ROOF?".

BUT THEY SIMPLY HAD TO. THEIR LIVES DEPENDED ON IT.

LUCKILY MY FATHER WAS THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE HOUSE AND HE HAD THE ONLY KEY TO THAT ROOM. BUT NOISES ESCAPED AT TIMES, WHEN THEY HAD TO GO TO THE W. C. THAT WAS NEXT TO THEIR ROOM.

SOME PEOPLE WERE SUSPICIOUS. IT WAS A SCARY SITUATION FOR US.

THERE WAS SOMEONE LIVING ON THE SECOND FLOOR WHO WAS A BROTHER OF A HIGH RANKING NAZI, AND WERE A LOT OF NAZIS COMING AND GOING IN THE HOUSE. ONE DAY THIS NAZI'S BROTHER GOT HOLD OF MY MOTHER AND THREATENED HER WITH REPORTING HER TO THE POLICE FOR ILLEGAL ACTIVITIES. WE DID NOT KNOW WHAT HE KNEW, BUT MY STEPMOTHER COULD NOT BE THREATENED. SHE GAVE HIM A TALK TO, THAT STOPPED HIM EVER SAYING ANYTHING AGAIN. INCIDENTALLY IT ALSO SAVED HIS LIFE, WHILE HIS BROTHER WAS FOUND GUILTY OF WAR CRIMES AND WAS EXECUTED AFTER THE WAR, FOR HIS DOINGS WITH THE JEWS.

THERE WAS ALWAYS SOMETHING TO UPSET US ON ACCOUNT OF THE JEWS IN THE ATTIC. THE NEXT THING WAS, WHEN WE LEARNED THAT OUR BUILDING WILL BE SEARCHED FOR " HIDDEN ENEMIES."

SO IN THE DARK OF THE NIGHT, THOSE LADIES WERE MOVED AGAIN. THIS TIME INTO THE SHAFT OF THE ELEVATOR. THE ELEVATOR WAS LOWERED RIGHT OVER THEIR HEADS, ALMOST TOUCHING. THEN MY FATHER WENT AND DISCONNECTED THE ELECTRIC LINES. NO ONE SUSPECTED WHY IT DID NOT WORK.

ONCE MORE THEY WERE SAFE.

I HAD A SPECIAL FEELING FOR THESE LADIES, SINCE THEY DID NOT HAVE RATION CARDS. WE SHARED WITH THEM WHATEVER WE HAD. IN THE LAST MONTHS, WHEN THERE WAS NO OTHER FOOD BESIDES POTATOES, I CARRIED UP THE LITTLE POTATOES WE COULD SPARE WITH TEARS IN MY EYES.

I WAS REMEMBERING, THAT WHEN I STAYED WITH MY MOM, THE REAL ONE, SHE HAD FIVE MOUTHS TO FEED. SHE JUST COULD NOT PROVIDE FOR ALL OF US, AND WE WERE FOREVER HUNGRY. IT WAS AT THE TIME MY FATHER LEFT US. MY MOM WASHED FOR PEOPLE, TO BE ABLE TO HAVE FOOD FOR US. WHEN I WAS HUNGRY, I USED TO GO INTO THE NEIGHBORS GARDENS TO PICK UP THE FALLEN FRUITS FROM UNDER THE TREES AND CUT OUT THE WORMS, AND ATE THE GOOD PART. BUT WHAT COULD THOSE PEOPLE DO IN THE ATTIC, THOSE POOR PEOPLE, AMONG THE FOUR TIGHT WALLS WHEN THEY ARE HUNGRY? WHAT COULD THEY DO??

THE TIME CAME WHEN THERE WAS NO MORE OF EVEN THE POTATOES.

IT WAS TERRIBLY COLD, AND MY MOM TOLD THESE LADIES TO GET OUT OF THE ROOM, BEFORE THEY DIE FROM FREEZING OR STARVATION. SHE TOLD THEM TO GO DOWN AND LIVE IN THE GARAGE, WHERE THE GERMANS HAD A FIELD KITCHEN. THEY HAD NO CHOICE. THEY WENT THERE AND OFFERED THE GERMANS TO COOK FOR THEM, FOR LETTING THEM TO SLEEP THERE.

NO ONE ASKED A QUESTION. THEY COULD HAVE BEEN BOMBED OUT,

HOMELESS PEOPLE. THEY COOKED FOR THE GERMANS AND THE GOOD COOKING WAS APPRECIATED AND THEY WERE FED THE SAME. AND THEY DID NOT FORGET US. THEY SHARED THEIR FOOD WITH US, SO WE TOO HAD WHAT TO EAT AND DID NOT STARVE ANY MORE.

THE WAR WAS COMING TO AN END. NO ONE HAD DOUBTS ANY MORE WHO THE WINNERS WILL BE. NO ONE REPORTED THE THREE JEWISH WOMEN OR US TO THE AUTHORITIES. THEY COULD MOVE FREELY AND GAINED STRENGTH. THEIR FEARS SEEMED TO BE GONE. WITHOUT THE YELLOW STAR, HOW COULD THE GERMANS KNOW ? THERE WAS ONLY ONE COUPLE IN THE BUILDING WHO WERE NEWCOMERS. THEY MIGHT HAVE BEEN OVER ZEALOUS. BUT THEY DID NOT BOTHER. WHEN THE WAR WAS OVER, WE LEARNED THEY WERE A JEWISH FAMILY IN HIDING UNDER FALSE IDENTITY.

SIX PEOPLE SURVIVED IN OUR BUILDING. AND MY MOTHER ALSO TOOK FOOD FOR PEOPLE IN THE GHETTO, WHILE SHE COULD. THEY USED TO LIVE IN OUR BUILDING, BUT WHEN THE LAW CAME OUT THEY OBEDIENTLY MOVED INTO THE GHETTO. THEY DIED THERE, AS SO MANY OTHERS, ONE COULD SEE CORPSES PILED UP, MY MOTHER TOLD ME. SOMETIMES WHEN I HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE STREETS WHERE THE GHETTO HAD BEEN, I MAKE THE SIGN OF CROSS AND SAY A SILENT PRAYER. THE SAME FEELING COMES OVER ME WHEN I SEE THE DANUBE. THE RIVER CARRIED A LOT OF JEWS DOWNSTREAM AFTER THEY WERE SHOT ON THE BANKS, CLOSE TO US WHERE

WE LIVED AND STILL DO. I WAS AT THAT TIME TWELVE YEARS OLD AND I ALSO SUFFERED FOR THE PEOPLE I SAW SUFFERING. EVEN FOR THOSE GERMAN BOYS, WHO WERE BLOWN UP BY THE GRANADES IN FRONT OF OUR HOME, AND WHOSE BODY PARTS WERE FLYING IN ALL DIRECTIONS.

I STILL HAVE VIVID PICTURES OF THE HAPPENINGS OF FORTYFOUR- FORTYFIVE, AND ON A LOVELY WARM SPRING EVENING, LOOKING DOWN THE STREET FROM MY FLOWER FILLED BALCONY, AND WITH THE LINDEN FLOWERS FRAGRANCE IN THE AIR, MY TEARS START FLOWING DOWN MY FACE FOR THE JEWS ON THE LEFT, WHERE THE DANUBE FLOWS, STILL REFLECTING THE LAST RAYS OF THE SUN, AND FOR THE BLOWN UP GERMANS ON THE RIGHT.

AND PEOPLE OFTEN SAY "THIS IS LIFE " BUT I, DEEP DOWN IN MY HEART I KNEW, THAT THAT WAS DEATH, WHEN IT COULD HAVE BEEN LIFE.

THIS WAS THE STORY OF MY LANDLADY, AND I WAS VERY TOUCHED BY IT. I HAVE THE PHOTOES OF HER HOME, AND THE VIEW FROM THE WINDOWS THAT I LOVED SO MUCH. I ALSO HAVE THE MEMORY OF HER AND HER HUSBAND, GEORGE KESZTHELYI. IT WAS A LOVELY EXPERIENCE FOR ME TO STAY WITH THEM. GEORGE'S MOTHER HAD A LIBRARY OF THE BEST FOREIGN BOOKS IN HUNGARIAN TRANSLATION. IT WAS USEFUL FOR ME TO BRUSH UP ON MY HUNGARIAN LANGUAGE BY READING WHILE LIVING THERE ABOUT TWO BOOKS A WEEK.

ERZSIKE, (NOW MRS KESZTHELYI) WAS JUST A LITTLE GIRL, WHEN SHE HAD A VERY GREAT RESPONSIBILITY, OF CARRYING A SECRET. SHE WAS PART OF A RESCUE. HIDING JEWS WERE PUNISHABLE BY DEATH.

HER PARENTS, ERZSEBET AND JONAS ERTLE WERE THE KIND OF HUMAN BEINGS WHO DID NOT WANT TO SAVE THEIR OWN LIFE, IF IT WOULD HAVE COST THE LIFE OF THREE JEWS, OR I GUESS ANYONE.

IN JERUSALEM THERE IS A FOREST. ELEVEN THOUSAND TREES ARE PLANTED THERE. EACH ONE REPRESENTS A PERSON, WHO HELPED A JEW TO SURVIVE. THERE ARE NAME PLATES SET UP FOR WHAT IS CALLED THE " THE RIGHTEOUS PERSON" THE ERTL FAMILY BELONGS IN THIS GROUP, AND I WILL MAKE SURE THAT THEY WILL GET THEIR TREES PLANTED FOR THEM FOR THEIR GOOD DEED OF SAVING LIVES.

I HAD A HEAVY LOAD TO CARRY, EVER SINCE I WAS A CHILD, BUT NOW IT SEEMS TO BE MUCH LIGHTER.....I MUST HAVE LOST PART OF THE LOAD.....

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